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THURSDAY, APRIL 23RD, 2015

Cowbridge May Fair
Bank Holiday Monday • May 4, 2015
PREVIEW ON PAGES 18 & 19

YOUR Sunday lunch GUIDE
Enjoy your time with family & friends

Spring into Summer Page 25

Grass fire epidemic reaches the Vale

The flames reach an electricity pylon. Photograph by LAURENCE TAYLOR.

by PHILIP IRWIN

TV and newspaper reports on the epidemic of grass fires in south Wales have concentrated on blazes in the valleys, in particular Rhondda Cynon Taf, but Aberthin in the Vale had a close call last Friday evening.

Fires that started on Stalling Down burned through the night, as the dramatic photographs by Leighton Evans (*page 4*) and Laurence Taylor show. The blaze was monitored by the Fire Service.

As the overall number of grass fires passed the 1,000 mark, South Wales Police promised strong action in the case of anyone convicted of starting them.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

IOLO TRAIL LAUNCHED IN TOWN

ABOVE: Trustees of the Cowbridge Charter Trust – left to right: Peter Jones, Linda Osborn, Percy Robson, Harry Hailes and Alan Crossley, and Coun Gwen Baty, are pictured at the launch of the Iolo Morganwg trail.
(SEE MORE PICTURES AND A FULL REPORT ON PAGE 3)

Cowbridge choirs are the champs!

IT was a weekend of stunning success on TV for two Cowbridge choirs – and their musical director, Mrs Eleri Roberts.

For the full details of this remarkable triumph, see page 16.

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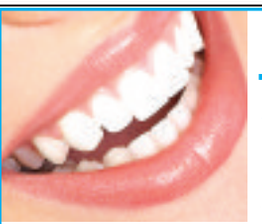
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Readers' Letters

Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, at Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL or email gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

LETTERS AND E-MAILS MUST INCLUDE FULL ADDRESS AND A CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER

IMPORTANT: We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail. An email address alone is not sufficient! We will (*in certain circumstances*) protect a writer's identity, if requested.

TRUST HELPS YOUNG PEOPLE

I WAS very pleased to read your headline news in The GEM of April 16 about Jack Cafaro's efforts to raise £2,600 to represent Wales at the Fencing Commonwealth Games in South Africa this July.

I was also glad to see that your article acknowledged the grant awarded to Jack from the Bryn Illtyd Trust.

Through your columns, I would like to inform your readers that the Bryn Illtyd Trust is a local charity that was established in the 1960s, following the sale of the original youth club, which stood on the land which is now Windmill Close and the lower part of Llanmaes Road in Llantwit Major.

The money from the sale was invested specifically for the benefit of the youth of the town and those living within the Benefice of Llantwit Major.

Applications are welcomed from clubs and societies, as well as from individuals, as long as the beneficiaries are under 25, live locally and can indicate that the money will be used for specific purposes and ventures that cannot be covered by any existing budgets.

Your readers may be interested to know that recently the trustees also awarded a grant of £300 each to the seven students from Llantwit Major Comprehensive School, who will be visiting India this summer on the World Challenge programme.

Dr David Ellis,
Treasurer, Bryn Illtyd Trust.

Lib Dem's 'alarm' over incinerator

I HAVE been following the planning process for the proposed wood-burning incinerator at Barry with some alarm.

I notice that the original plan was approved after an appeal, but I am astonished that the company responsible now wished to amend their plans as they believe that the 'principle' of having an incinerator has been established.

It is my opinion that the change to the design, involving larger capacity, taller emissions stack and different technologies should really be considered as a fresh application and not just a variation on a theme.

I am disappointed that Vale Council has not resisted this attempt to establish a major industrial unsightly facility so close to the proposed new housing development and waterfront sports/activities centre.

The additional heavy-vehicle traffic generated will surely also impact on the success of the newly-reopened Barry Island leisure facilities.

I am pleased that my colleague, Eluned Parrot AM has also strongly objected to this project.

David Morgan,
Welsh Liberal parliamentary candidate for Vale of Glamorgan.

Soviets' sacrifice

IN response to the letter from S Fackrell of Barry ('Stalin was also an evil despot', The GEM, April 9), I have never been, nor will be, an admirer of Stalin.

I do, however, give thanks for the sacrifices made by the armed forces and people of the Soviet Union. Without their sacrifices, the struggle against Nazism would have been considerably longer and, possibly, unsuccessful.

This is not to belittle every nation and resistance movement who also fought the evil Nazi regime.

Christopher Short,
Barry.

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THE VALE'S NEW WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICE CHARGES: *why and how*

THE Vale Council introduced waste management service charges on April 1, and I would like to take this opportunity to clarify why we implemented them and how they apply.

As with all councils in Wales, the Vale continues to face increasing financial pressures. It is hoped the introduction of charges will save almost £270,000 and that this will help safeguard frontline waste management services, such as street cleansing, public convenience provision, and enforcement.

The charge for bulky item collection will be £15 per three items, with additional items charged at £5 each up to a maximum of five items.

Concessions are available for qualifying residents, allowing up to two free collections in any one year. For information on concessions, call C1V on 01446 700111.

Residents will still be able to take bulky items to either of the household waste recycling centres in the Vale, or choose to donate good quality items to charity.

During April, participating residents receive a supply of biodegradable kitchen waste bags. This will allow for three full caddies, which equates to 15kg of food waste, per week.

Additional rolls can be purchased for £2, equivalent to 4p per bag, from council receptions and Vale libraries, or can be ordered from C1V with postage applied. Alternatively, residents can line their caddy with newspaper.

Dog waste bags are now charged at £1 for a roll of 50 bags, equivalent to 2p a bag, and are available from council receptions and Vale libraries.

To use the council's HWRCs at either Barry or Llandow, vans and trailers will be charged an administration fee of £15 for a single use permit.

This is good value when compared to other alternatives such as skip hire and is comparable to the charges levied by other councils.

Recycling boxes and kitchen caddies will be charged at £1 each, bringing them in line with the charges currently in place for blue recycling bags and reusable garden waste bags.

I would also like to appeal to all readers to visit the Love Food Hate Waste website at www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk for some useful tips on reducing food waste and for great recipe ideas on how to use leftovers.

Finally, I would like to remind readers that all household and commercial waste that we collect should be placed at the kerbside of their property on the scheduled collection day, and any receptacles used should be taken in as soon as possible afterwards.

Please remember not to place any waste out on non-collection days as this could be classed as fly-tipping, which is a criminal offence.

Clifford Parish,
(Operational Manager for Waste Management and Cleansing)

Parties need to work together

IT looks like we are heading for yet another hung Parliament, but as always, the political parties are against joining together and working cooperatively.

I am really fed up with this Punch and Judy style of politics. Instead of adversarial politics, they should all work together and be positive.

Unfortunately, we are seeing in this campaign an old-fashioned tribal attitude – which is not good and is not working.

This is exactly why people are turned off from voting! Perhaps if we saw more change, then more people would vote.

Instead of the squabbling and name-calling, let's see more of them prepared to work with others.

Coun Richard Bertin,
Barry.

Crossing will end obstruction

I AGREE with Derek Hooper (GEM letters, April 16) that there is a major problem with illegal parking in the Witchill pub area at Barry.

Like him, I have contacted the council: a pedestrian crossing is needed to cross Barry Road from the general store to the post office.

The problem is so much illegal parking is taking place, leading to traffic backing up in both directions.

People wanting to cross the road are put in danger every day, and the situation needs looking at.

A crossing at the place I have suggested would end illegal parking, and the obstuction course.

C Kendall, Barry.

Sad loss of Max

ON Friday morning, April 17, out much-loved greyhound, Max, collapsed and unexpectedly died in Cwm Colhugh meadow near Llantwit Major beach.

We would like to sincerely thank the lady and gentleman who stopped to help us. Unfortunately, we do not have their name and address.

Also to Shirley and Jean for their care and support at the time.

Thanks to all family, friends and fellow dog walkers who have shown us so much kindness and understanding.

Max was loved by so many and to us is irreplaceable.

Liz and John Thomas,
Llantwit Major.

Put health cash to better use

SADLY, the lady who wrote in The GEM last week regarding her daughter's health and the awful experience of ESA, is not alone.

I consider myself very lucky to have good health and be able to work. I am happy to pay my tax and NI in the knowledge we have a safety net to help others who are not as lucky.

I am happy part of my stoppages go towards training and employing highly specialised medical professionals, who are there when we need them. What I am not happy about is paying towards an IT company which basically trashes the opinion of these specialists and says they are wrong.

This whole scheme is an expensive farce, it causes upset and misery to people who ar already suffering and achieves nothing.

The sooner this ridiculous idea is dropped the better and, hopefully, the money paid to this company can be put to use helping people, not harming them.

Sue Eldridge,
Barry.

'Why I will not be volunteering for the libraries'

WHAT an upbeat article (The GEM, April 9) urging the public to rally the community together to run voluntary-based libraries!

This has truly humbled me as I now understand what democracy means in this part of Wales.

In the Vale, it has created a local council that railroads its own political agenda under the guise of choice.

Voluntary-run libraries were not supported by the public.

I, as a passionate believer in education, self, state and private, for all ages, filled in the first questionnaire issued by the Vale Council.

I filled it in to keep the libraries open. Then, like a caring citizen who lives literature, I ticked the box saying that I would consider volunteering for the libraries.

Soon after, all those kind-hearted citizens realised what they had done, and with the bells of 'education, education, education,' ringing in our ears like a state funeral, we were led blinkered into the brave new world.

So I will not volunteer.

A group chosen by the council will no doubt fill the roles, all echoing how wonderful the Vale is in taking democracy to the people.

Roul Duke,
Barry.

'Cardiff Airport is in need of more business sense'

READING about Cardiff Airport in The GEM (April 16), I felt quite dismayed, but not surprised, that £8m of the taxpayers' money has been thrown at it.

Usually when a business is not paying, it can be bought for £1, then invested into to try and make it pay. This airport is just soaking up millions to make pounds. (There's a bus which runs around all day virtually empty as well).

It is a shame, as this ought to be 'The Airport for Wales', so that people do not have to travel all the way to Bristol, a journey which I personally hate – when just a few miles away, there's *my* airport.

In England, they have had their rates frozen for the last two years, whereas ours just keep going up and up – to pay for schemes like this, I suppose.

The Welsh Government is in need of someone with business sense not to throw away our hard earned cash.

AJ Atkins,
Sully.

HIGH TIDE TIMES
(UNTIL APRIL 30)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
23 Thur	10.24	9.4	22.39	9.1
24 Fri	11.07	8.8	23.25	8.7
25 Sat	11.53	8.1		
26 Sun	00.17	7.9	12.44	7.7
27 Mon	01.24	7.5	14.11	7.4
28 Tues	02.47	7.7	15.29	7.7
29 Wed	03.59	7.8	16.33	7.9
30 Thur	04.54	8.2	17.19	8.4

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should check with a tide table specific to their location.

We abide by the code of practice upheld by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). This contains provisions for issues such as accuracy.

If you have a complaint, write to us at the address below, left, or call editorial manager Don John on 01446 774484. All complaints will be fully investigated. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may wish to contact IPSO c/o Halton House, 20-23 High Holborn, London EC1N 2JD. Website: www.ipso.co.uk. Tel: 0300 123 2220. E-Mail: complaints@ipso.co.uk. Enquiries: inquiries@ipso.co.uk.

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Cowbridge remembers Iolo Morganwg

A group of 50 people gathered in Old Hall Gardens on Saturday, April 11, to unveil the Iolo stone, which marks the start of the Iolo Morganwg trail.

Thirty of the gathering were members of Merched y Wawr from near Pwllheli, who had travelled the length of Wales to experience the walk, and members of the Cowbridge branch were there to greet them.

Also launched were Cowbridge Charter Trust's two workbooks for children, one on the wildlife of Old Hall Gardens, the other on its history, which includes a short town centre Iolo Trail manageable by children.

These workbooks are aimed at encouraging school visits and were generously funded by Creative Rural Communities and by Environment Wales.

The unveilers were Coun Lis Burnett, the Vale Council cabinet member for regeneration, innovation, planning and transportation, and Coun Gwen Baty, a past Mayor of the town. They whipped off the Welsh flag covering the stone to reveal the slate plaque which records the dedication to Iolo Morganwg.

In her speech, Coun Burnett remarked: "I am hugely thankful for the support the Cowbridge Charter Trust gives to the town. Working in partnership means the council can achieve so much more with limited resources."

The simple ceremony came to a wonderful close when Merched y Wawr spontaneously sang their song celebrating the land and language of Wales. Half the party then set off on the St Hilary walk and the rest focused on the town centre, ending with a visit to Cowbridge Museum, opened specially for them by Deb Fisher and the Museum stewards.

Iolo was a great advocate for the Vale; he saw it as the garden of Wales and called it Britain's Paradise. To celebrate his life here, nothing could be more appropriate than a walk, because he was such a prodigious walker himself, even walking to London.

The Iolo Trail extends from Cowbridge to Aberthin, St Hilary and Llanblethian (6.5 miles) or St Hilary and Llanblethian (4.5 miles) and takes in the historic town centre and its surrounding fields and wooded paths.

The places of interest along the way are linked to Iolo Morganwg and give a taste of the many different aspects of the life and character of this polymath, who did so much to revitalise respect for Welsh culture, a legacy that persists to this day in the National Eisteddfod.

The megalith of Pennant sandstone, which evokes the bardic tradition of the eisteddfod, was a generous gift from Gwrhyd Quarry, part of the Marshalls Group, along with another mighty rock which has been placed on Stalling Down along the route of the Iolo Walk to celebrate the site of his first Gorsedd meeting in Wales in 1795.

Gwrhyd quarry is high above Pontardawe with such a matchless view of the Black Mountain Range that it's impossible to believe Swansea is a mere 12 miles to the south.

Merched y Wawr had a very full agenda: they reconvened over lunch at Iolo's old meeting place, the Bear Hotel, before heading off by coach to follow part of the wider Iolo trail – visiting the Galilee Chapel in Llantwit Major to learn more from local ambassador Dilwen Jones about Iolo's connections, including his discovery of one of the Celtic stones – now strikingly exhibited in the restored chapel.

The grand finale was a concert in which Guto Dafis and Alawon Llanilltud Fawr tune club, along with Côr yr Efail, performed folk songs and tunes of the Vale, which had been written down for posterity by Iolo himself.

Pwllheli and Cowbridge branch of Merched y Wawr with the Cowbridge Charter Trustees.

Other recent additions to the Iolo trail include two new information boards in Cowbridge (Birds Lane and Old Hall); a timeline which can be found in his old shop (now Costa Coffee) and an information board in Llancarfan, produced by the Llancarfan Society, to celebrate the link between nearby Pen-Onn (where he was born) and the church where he was baptised in 1747.

The trail booklet is almost out of print but independent publishers Y Lolfa have said they will take it on and sell it across Wales. In the meantime, a pamphlet covering the circular walk can be found in the Vale Trails collection 'Walk 9: Iolo Morganwg Heritage Walk'.

The Iolo Morganwg project was funded by the Welsh Government's Rural Development Plan for Wales and was developed in partnership with Creative Rural Communities, the Vale Council's rural regeneration team, and with the scholarly support of Iolo expert Professor Geraint Jenkins.

Old Hall Gardens is managed by volunteers from Cowbridge Charter Trust in partnership with the Vale Council, with funding from Environment Wales and Creative Rural Communities. ***HH.***

Vale ambassador Branwen Dickson writes: Cafwyd diwrnod gwych wedi ei fendithio gan dywydd da. Yn ystod y lansiad rhoddwyd hefyd air o ddiolch mawr i'r Athro Geraint Jenkins nad oedd yn gallu bod yno am yr holl oriau gwirfoddolodd i'r prosiect yn ymchwilio a pharatoi'r testun ar gyfer y llyfryn. Wedi cael blas ar hanes a harddwch yr ardal, roedd Merched y Wawr yn gytun y byddai angen dychwelyd i ddarganfod a gweld mwy!

Cowbridge Charter Trust: www.cctrust.co.uk/www.oldhallgardens.org. Iolo Morganwg and the Vale: www.iolomorganwg.wales.ac.uk/bro.php.

Iolo Morganwg Trail Booklet and Heritage Walk pamphlet: www.visitthevale.com. Cowbridge Museum: www.culture24.org.uk/wa000029.

ABOVE: Vale councillor Lis Burnett and town councillor Gwen Baty.

Life behind the camera

ON April 8, Cowbridge U3A we had an interesting talk from Don Llewellyn on his career at HTV and other organisations.

His first advice was do not show your holiday snaps to 'friends' as (in my words) they can often be sponsored by Horlicks! I am sure we have all been there at some point.

However, we were pleasantly surprised to find that Don, among other awards, had won an Oscar, a Bafta, a New York award for a TV series, and many others. He was, the way, champion gardener of the year for small gardens in Cardiff.

As a producer, director. editor and general organiser he was very well respected. He described the then new building at Culverhouse Cross as state of the art at the time and the best in Europe. It was described by a foreign visitor as the 'Taff Mahal'.

During his career, among other things he directed 'Survival of the Fittest' which morphed into 'Trailblazers' presented by personalities such as Paul Ringer, Gerald Davies, John Taylor and Jill Dando.

Many other ventures followed, including an interview with the daughter of Morris Llewellyn Humphries, better known as 'Murray the Humph', the brains behind Al Capone and The St Valentine's Day Massacre. Frank Sinatra came to his daughter's wedding – an invitation he couldn't refuse. His parents came from mid Wales and he was born within a year of Capone in Chicago a year after arriving in America.

Finally, he talked about the Llandow air disaster. Returning from Dublin after Wales won the Triple Crown, a plane crashed at Sigingstone in the 1950s with 80 killed, (75 supporters, five crew). There were three survivors. As a result of the programme, the public gathered money to erect a memorial stone.

Don conveyed to us all how much he loved his job and it was lovely to join him in his fascinating trip down memory lane.

Don't forget Tools For Africa; contact Pat Smith on 01656 668446 and she will arrange for tools to be collected from your home.

Next meeting, Town Hall, 2pm, May13; Restoration of Llandaff Cathederal, Arthur Impey. **TB**

Blood Bikes Wales gets a £1,000 boost from the Pontyclun Community Shop

Pictured here are director Dr T John Griffiths and shop manager, Vanessa Pullman.

BLOOD BIKES Wales has received a £1,000 donation from the Pontyclun Community Shop, after a member of their board paid a 'mid area' meeting a visit to hear about its work.

The Parish of Pontyclun Community Shop Ltd is a joint venture founded 20 years ago by the Parish of Pontyclun with Talygarn.

It considers any good causes or individuals in need, and gives out at least £20,000 in donations, every year.

The shop trades in charity, hope, Christian witness and Christian outreach, and sells furniture, beds, clothes, soft furnishings, prams and bikes, books, household goods, DVDs, toys and bric-a-brac. It is non-profit making and relies on the good will of a dedicated team of volunteers to work and serve in the shop.

The shop is based at 11-13 Cowbridge Road, Pontyclun, RCT, CF72 9UE; telephone 01443 222444.

Chance for young cooks to get that flying start!

YOUNG cooks can get a good grounding in the basics now that a Cowbridge store is running cookery workshops.

'Cooked Up' is a cooking and nutrition school based in Wales, and have joined up with Daisy and Jack in the High Steet to help youngsters learn more about food and cooking.

Natalie Davies of Daisy and Jack said: "We are super excited at Daisy and Jack to let you know that 'Cooked up' are hosting parties and running cookery workshops for children from our upstairs space.

"I'm sure you'll all agree that in these days of fast food and busy lives we all know how important it is for our children to learn how to cook and make the right choices!

"Why not check out the website *www.cookedup.co.uk* for more information on these fantastic classes".

You can read your GEM online. Visit ***cowbridge-today.co.uk***

Cowbridge Bridge Club

RESULTS for Cowbridge and District (Llanbleddian) Bridge Club:

March 3: First, Pam Higgs and Brenda Grove, 68 per cent; second, Mary Thomas and Hugh Williams, 61; third, Helen and Mike Ruttley, 58.5.

March 10: First. Sara Bartlett and Glenda Roberts, 63.21 per cent; second, Amy Owen and Heather Atkin, 61.04; third, Mary Wallis and Mearl Owen, 59.29.

March 17: First, Teri Pollard and Anne Hughes, 60.23 per cent; second, Rita Williams and Marian East,59.09; third, Pam Higgs and Brenda Grove, 56.36.

March 24: First, Teri Pollard and Anne Hughes, 62.99 per cent; second, Margaret and Mostyn Bancroft, 62.66; third, Ann Miller and Judith Nunn, 59.09.

March 31: First, Pauline Lane and Hugh Williams, 58.75 per cent; second, Helen and Mike Ruttley, 55; third, Margaret and Mostyn Bancroft, 51.88. **ME**

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Jean praises Jan for her long service!

LLANMAES WI marked the retirement of its president with a special presentation.

Long-serving president Mrs Jan Jones was presented with a gift (above) by Mrs Jean Thomas, the longest-serving member, who has been a member of Llanmaes WI for 51 years.

Jean thanked Jan for her dedication and good humour, recalling the many good times they had enjoyed through the WI.

Llanmaes WI meets at Llanmaes Village Hall on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm and new members are very welcome.

For enquiries contact the secretary, Margaret Stephens on 01446 792465.

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Widow's despair over election literature

by GEM REPORTER

A St Athan widow said she has been upset to receive election information from the Labour Party's HQ in London, emailed to 'Dear David' – even though her husband died seven months ago.

Mrs Hazel Morgan said the constant emails had been "upsetting". She is still coming to terms with David's death at just 61 years of age. He was a diabetic and had had to have a leg amputated.

Mrs Morgan explained: "My husband died last September and I miss him very much.

"I have been getting emails addressed to 'Dear David' since last October from the Labour Party headquarters.

"I have written back to them asking them to stop and I have tried to unsubscribe from their emails, but they still come through. He had never been a member of the Labour Party."

Mrs Morgan said she had also been getting emails from the Labour Party in the Vale – but after she complained, the local parliamentary candidate, Chris Elmore, had apologised to her, and the local emails did stop.

"I've rung up Labour's headquarters in London and a girl said they would stop sending them, but they still come. I was devastated when my husband died and this has been upsetting."

The Glamorgan GEM approached Labour Party headquarters in Cardiff and explained how distressed Mrs Morgan was.

A spokesman for the Party said: "We apologise for any distress to Mrs Morgan and have rectified the situation."

Primary school pupils build model Severn bridge crossing

Llantwit Major Comprehensive School recently invited year-5 pupils from Eagleswell, Llanilltud Fawr, Rhws, St Athan, St Illtyd and Wick and Marcross primary schools to take part in the construction of a 15m long, model cable-stayed bridge (the same design as the second Severn crossing), under the expert supervision and guidance of representatives from the Institution of Civil Engineers.

"This proved to be a great team-building activity and pupils took pride in their efforts when they all safely walked across the bridges they had built," a spokeswoman reported.

APPEAL AFTER MINDLESS FIRE RAISERS PUT LIVES AT RISK

ABOVE: The grass fire burned through the night near Aberthin.
Photograph by ***LEIGHTON EVANS.***

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

As fire crews are being severely restricted in dealing with house fires and road accidents by the deliberate lighting of fires, Crimestoppers Wales (Cymru), have appealed to the communities affected to call Crimestoppers free and anonymously, if they know those who may be involved.

A spokeswoman said: "Heartless fire raisers have been risking people's lives, with potentially tragic consequences, if their actions prevent the fire service from being able to attend a life-threatening incident in good time".

The Welsh Government Minister for Public Services, Leighton Andrews AM, issued a statement, saying: "I commend the Fire and Rescue Services, and individual firefighters, for their response to these outbreaks.

"The South Wales Fire and Rescue Service has borne the brunt of these fires, and has introduced specific arrangements to ensure fire cover remains available should a house fire occur whilst firefighters are being used to deal with extensive grassland fires.

"I welcome the tough stance taken by South Wales Police. We should not be in this position. Starting grass fires is a crime.

"It puts people in danger – both firefighters and members of the public.

"This is before we talk about the damage to wildlife, livestock and the environment, and the significant cost to the public purse of dealing with these fires."

To pass on information about these fires anonymously, call Crimestoppers free on 0800 555 111, or online at www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Blood pressure test popular!

THE Rotary Club of Llantwit Major and the Stroke Association have been working in partnership for a number of years to help combat high blood pressure, the single biggest factor in stroke risks.

On Saturday, April 18, a very successful event was held in the shopping precinct at Llantwit Major, where around 100 people had their blood pressure tested.

Each year, an estimated 150,000 people across the UK will have a stroke. It is one of the top three causes of death and the single largest cause of adult disability.

There are often no symptoms of high blood pressure, so these measurements are vitally important. **TC**

Jack's trike is a step closer

ABOVE: Jack tries out the trike that will give him a new sense of freedom.

THE people of Llantwit Major have responded to an appeal to help a severely disabled little boy get a specially adapted trike.

Jack Vincent, aged three, has a form of 'dystonic cerebral palsy', resulting in multiple disabilities including severe mobility problems.

Jack, his mum Debra and dad Mark, attended Pedal Power in Cardiff, where Jack was able to try out a specially-adapted trike.

Debra said: "Jack and we were thrilled to find a piece of equipment that not only met his requirements, but also gave him a sense of freedom."

The trike is very expensive, so The Old White Hart public house decided it wanted to help the family out with fundraising events.

Elenid Carlig of the Old White Hart, who is holding regular raffles, said: "We've had an amazing response – we are currently raffling a wonderful prize of an 'Hour's Flight Experience' on behalf of Cardiff Aviation Training Ltd; Ruth Jones has signed DVD Series 1-3 of Stella; and we've had £100 donated by a generous 'passer by."

The GEM will keep readers informed as fundraising continues.

LOCAL YOUNG SCIENTISTS ENJOY FIRST SCHOOL FAIR

Photograph by Ian Dixon.

RECENTLY, Peterston super Ely CIW Primary School held its first ever science fair in school.

The children were encouraged to work together on a science investigation of their choice and then display their findings for all the children to view. The entries were then judged by experts in the field of science from Cardiff University and the Hospital of Wales.

The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience and learnt so much from working together to make hypotheses and carry out their investigations.

Mrs Lloyd, headteacher, said: "It was refreshing to see the children so engaged in science and allowed us the opportunity to strengthen our links with the wider community."

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'If writing was in English we would know what it meant'

Black and white flag in Main Street puzzles residents

LEFT: The mystery flag was suspended outside an empty flat in Main Street.

by TIM CHAPMAN

RESIDENTS in a street in Barry woke up on Monday morning wondering whether an ISIS flag had been raised above an empty shop.

The black and white flag had been put up overnight and people were puzzled as to what the writing on it meant.

A local resident, who did not want to be named in the paper, said: "When people walked past it they were wondering whether it was an ISIS flag.

"I went out for a walk on Monday morning and saw it as I returned. Someone said to me: 'Is it an Isis flag?'

"Black and white seems to represent ISIS.

"Someone claimed the words meant 'Peace and love', but without an English translation on the flag we don't know."

The man said putting up the flag without people knowing its meaning was not being responsible.

"This area is a melting pot and everyone gets on. I have Welsh friends who have converted (to Islam) – they might not be able to read it themselves and be concerned. People get along here and we don't want problems."

He said that if it was an Islamic flag, he wondered whether the Welsh flag would be welcomed in an Islamic country.

A local trader said: "I understand it was put up at 12.30am on Monday morning. People locally were shocked to see it. If it had been in English people would have known what it meant.

"We don't know whether it is aggressive or peaceful. People have been discussing it in the street."

Rita Limbrick, who has won a major community award for south Wales and who runs the a local multicultural meeting place and cafe, said she had been in touch with a local Muslim who had been able to translate what was on the flag.

"It says 'Islam is one'. They should have put it up in English so people would understand and not panic.

"I came out of my house at 9.30am and people began to approach me because I am the local community person."

The GEM understands the flat has been empty, and that the estate agent dealing with it was informed about the flag. It was removed on Monday afternoon.

A South Wales Police spokesman told The GEM: ***"We received reports concerning a flag on display on a building in Main Street, Barry.***

"Officers attended the scene and it was quickly established that the flag did not contain any inflammatory messages. The flag has now been removed."

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WRITE A WILL – and support Ty Hafan

Luca with his dad, Angelo.

GIFTS in Wills change lives. For Tŷ Hafan they are vital in providing care and support to children with short lives all across south Wales.

They are essential in supporting families like the Pucellas from Bridgend: Luca Pucella is a happy, energetic eight-year-old with an infectious laugh and a wicked sense of humour. But what makes Luca different to other boys of his age is that he suffers from a rare life-limiting condition called ROHHAD syndrome.

He is the only person in Wales to suffer from the condition, which affects only 75 people worldwide. ROHHAD syndrome causes rapid-onset obesity, impairment of the autonomic nervous system and reduced lung function.

Angelo, Luca's dad, said: "When Luca was first diagnosed, we felt very much on our own."

But the family felt a huge sense of relief when they were referred to Tŷ Hafan in 2010.

"Tŷ Hafan has always been there on the other end of the phone, they've visited us in hospital and provided vital short-break care."

Gifts in Wills are a crucial source of funding for Tŷ Hafan, and in fact fund 20 per cent of the care the charity provides. Without gifts in Wills, the children's hospice simply couldn't support as many families.

Thanks to the support of over 25 solicitors from across south Wales, Tŷ Hafan is running its Write a Will scheme again this year.

Between May 11 and 22, the team of solicitors has agreed to waive the usual will-writing fee, and ask that you make a suggested donation of £50 for a Simple Will or £75 for Mirror Wills to Tŷ Hafan instead.

To find out more about the scheme, visit www.tyhafan.org/will50 or call 029 2053 2255.

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yr hosbis i blant yng Nghymru

COWBRIDGE COMPREHENSIVE RULES THE ROOST IN YEAR-8 BASKETBALL!

THE under-13 girls took part in the Lady Taverners south west regional cricket competition where nine schools took part in three groups.

Cowbridge played Connaught from Hampshire and St Peter's school. The schools were very strong and we lost both matches.

In the final play-off, we unfortunately lost our matches to both Winterbourne and John Bentley.

Year-7 Siân Russell, who has recently been selected for the under-12 Welsh squad, captained the team. She batted well and took several wickets during the day. Beth Edwards (wicket keeper) fielded well under pressure.

Other team members were Ella K Jones who batted very well, retiring in two of the games, year-8 Daisy Connolly, Ella M Jones, Ushenka Rajapakse, Helena McCormack, year-7 Lowenna Radcliffe and Nishenka Rajapakse.

Cowbridge wins basketball

THE school basketball league finished on April 15 with the semi-final winners journeying to Cardiff City's House of Sport for finals day.

Cowbridge were represented by their year-8 A team, taking on local rivals Porthcawl Comprehensive.

Both teams started the game slowly but Cowbridge settled in more quickly with all their perimeter players driving hard inside, testing the Porthcawl frontline. Will Marsden opened the scoring for Cowbridge with Tommy A following soon after.

Porthcawl got on the board shortly after but then Jamie Owens joined his fellow Cowbridge guards on the score sheet. The first quarter ended with Cowbridge leading 9-4.

Super-substitute Rory James entered the game and brought his trademark defensive intensity with him. Despite upping their defensive effort Cowbridge kept it going offensively as well.

The co-captains ApJohn and Durrant started to click, hitting jumpers, lay-ups and put-backs from everywhere and Porthcawl struggled to find an answer. Cowbridge ended the half with a comfortable, but not secure, lead of 18-7.

As the third quarter began, Will Marsden re-entered the game and wasted no time demonstrating that he could score. Sophie Hawkins subbed in for the first time and quickly got into the action, cutting across the baseline to catch a well-timed pass for an open jumper that swished through.

Porthcawl had started to find their offensive game but it came at the expense of their defence. Cowbridge were rolling now and they unleashed a torrent of attack with all five players knocking down shots. The quarter ended with Cowbridge having an almost insurmountable lead of 16 points, 38-22.

Knowing there were only seven minutes between them and the title, Cowbridge entered the fourth quarter determined to bring home the silverware. Struggling to get calls earlier in the game, Jamie Owen took over, scoring inside and out. Knowing the game was out of reach, and finding no answer for the Cowbridge defence, Porthcawl emptied their bench.

In final minutes, Tom ApJohn exited the game to a standing ovation, having scored 19 points. Backup point guard Jess Gregory replaced him and played the final stretch of the game through gritted teeth as she shook off a dodgy ankle.

The game ended with Cowbridge winning 56-22, wrapping up the most successful season in recent Cowbridge history. Mr Hume was pleased with the result. "I've pushed these guys hard this year but I know they'd all agree it was worth it. They're unbeaten for two straight years now.

"There's the potential here to dominate this league for the next five years, so hopefully this was just the start. We'll have energetic forward Joel Carter back from injury next year, and our reserves have all made massive strides - bring on 2016!"

Young sailors target international events

DURING the Easter holidays, three 16-year olds have been competing against the best sailors in Britain at the youth nationals for the opportunity to represent their country at a variety of international events in the summer.

Brother and sister Matthew and Jemma Viney, and Matilda Matthews, who are already members of the Great Britain under-18 national youth squad, have been selected to represent GB at the World Championships in Japan and at the Eurosafs in Brest.

After a tough week of competing in Weymouth, Matthew, paired with Dan Atherton from the Isle of Wight, finished fifth overall (second boy) and was selected for the junior Europeans in Bulgaria. Sailing partners Jemma and Matilda finished 10th overall and second Welsh girls.

They had been training in Weymouth (home of sailing in the 2012 Olympics) the week before to familiarise themselves with the conditions. The sailors raced for a week to fight for the grants and places to the top international events. They proved that they are among the top sailors in the country by staying focused on the task in hand.

The three prepared for the event through the winter, sailing every weekend at national and Welsh squad camps. They will continue to train for the upcoming competition season alongside their upcoming exams at Cowbridge Comprehensive School and Bro Morgannwg.

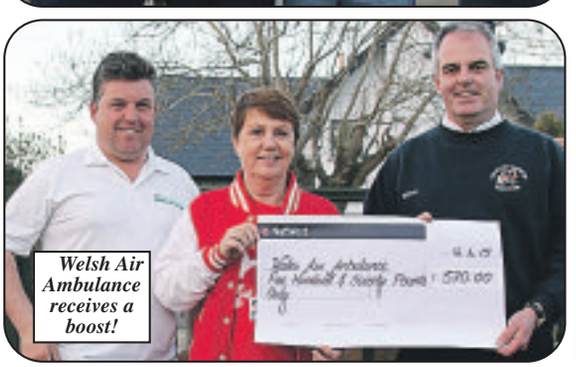
Girls' year-8 basketball team: Jess Gregory, Sophie Hawkins, Emily Gregory, Hollie Oakman, Nicole Yip, Kate Floyd, Maddie Rooney, Connie Wood.

Basketball league, year-8 team: Tom ApJohn-Williams, Adam Durrant, Alex Oldham, Jamie Owen, Rory James, Will Marsden, Sophie Hawkins, Jess Gregory.

Boys' year-8 basketball team: Tom Apjohn-Williams (co-captain), Jamie Owen, Alex Oldham, Adam Durrant (co-captain), Will Marsden, Rory James, Iwan Apjohn-Williams.

Tractor Boys (and Girls) hand over their charity cheques

A cheque for Multiple Sclerosis Cymru. PHOTOGRAPHS BY GLYN EVANS.



Welsh Air Ambulance receives a boost!

A VERY well-attended presentation evening for Tractor Boys of Aberthin was held at the Blacksmith's Arms, Llanmaes on Tuesday, April 14 – the result of two tractor runs held earlier in the year.

The first was on behalf of JG Plant with all money raised being donated to the Welsh Air Ambulance. The second was in conjunction with the Blacksmith's Arms, with all cash raised going to Multiple Sclerosis Cymru.

On behalf of the fundraisers, a cheque for £570 was presented by Martyn Huish to Valeria of the Welsh Air Ambulance, and a cheque for £850 was presented by Steve Davies to Karen Jones and Rod Hill, of Multiple Sclerosis Cymru.

Following the presentation of the cheques, the Tractor Boys and Girls decided to sample the culinary delights being offered by the Blacksmith's Arms on their weekly Tuesday Steak Night - I can highly recommend the experience!

Many thanks to everyone who attended and supported the presentation, to Mike and staff at the Blacksmith's Arms for looking after us, and to all those who took part in the two tractor runs, helping to raise money to support these two charities.

SRD

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We're also on Facebook - *facebook.com/GlamorganGEM*

Under-13 Lady Taverners.

How The Jam Fund is helping sick children – following the release of 16 red balloons

by GEM REPORTER

PAUL ADAMSON released 16 red balloons at Christmas, beside the resting place of his son Jamie, who inspired The Jam Fund.

The fund has raised more than £400,000 and helped numerous youngsters suffering from ill health, as well as providing support for their families.

Paul hoped the balloons would seek out other youngsters across the country who needed help.

He said: "When I released the balloons last Christmas Day, I attached tags with a hand written note on each one asking whoever found one to contact me by e-mail and the charity would try and help any child that they wished to nominate.

"The first was discovered in Somerset near Glastonbury on Boxing Day by Tina James. I am currently trying to find a child to donate to in that area.

"The second was found on March 17 in a back garden in Wimbourne, Dorset by a lady called Nicola Price.

"Nicola has a friend who also runs a leukaemia charity and we are liaising to find a child there to help."

The next balloon triggered a surprising coincidence.

Paul explained: "The third balloon was found in Ferndown Woods, Dorset. This is extremely coincidental because this is where Suzy Charman, The Jam Fund's official runner in the London Marathon, works on a daily basis.

"I think the odds that a balloon would find its way to within a few hundred metres of Suzy, over 75 miles away, in a straight line, is incredible!

"The lady who found the balloon is called Sara Farrow. She had cancer three years ago and is originally from the Isle of Wight.

"Sara nominated a little girl named Perri who is currently in Bristol Children's Hospital having undergone some very traumatic treatment against cancer.

"Perri's mum and aunt have requested The Jam Fund finances a 'Princess bedroom makeover' for Perri as a surprise before she gets home, which we are now in the process of doing.

"In addition, a fourth balloon was found in the Bournemouth area, a distance of 75 miles, by a lady named Yvonne Thomas.

"As Suzy has already raised over £1,700 we will be donating to Perri and another two children in the Bournemouth area. I think the odds of a balloon ending up so close where The Jam Fund runner works are huge and I like to believe Jamie had a say in it!"

Recently, the fund has been helping families who have suffered the pain of losing young children.

Paul said: "We are in the process of financing three headstones for local children and hope it will bring some comfort to the parents and families concerned.

"The charity is also donating £1,000 to a local little boy who is suffering from muscular dystrophy and we are donating this sum towards a scaled down petrol driven jeep vehicle which he can drive.

"I want to also thank Paul Mitchell from Penarth who has run in the Cardiff half marathon in the past for the charity and is now also running in this year's London Marathon having got into the event through his running club Penarth and Dinas Runners."

DESTINY

Suzy, The Jam Fund's runner, told The GEM: "I am so pleased that I have so far been able to raise just over £1,700 for this super charity.

"I have been running for about three years now and the marathon has always been a goal. I was lucky enough to be introduced to Paul via a mutual friend. I have to say that I have really enjoyed my marathon training much more than I thought despite the early starts on cold, dark mornings and the lack of wine.

"The amazing part of this story is that three of Paul's balloons made their way to my home county of Dorset, and two of them ended up only minutes from my place of work. It has to be destiny!"

Suzy takes part in the London Marathon on Sunday, April 26.

For more on The Jam Fund go to: www.jamfund.co.uk/; or e m a i l : jamfund@sky.com.

Suzy Charman who is running the London Marathon on behalf of The Jam Fund.

Sara Farrow with the red balloon tag she found.

Paul releasing the 16 red balloons.

Election debate in Cowbridge

THE candidates standing in the Vale of Glamorgan Parliamentary election have ben invited to an election hustings in Cowbridge on Monday, April 27, at 7.30pm in Holy Cross Church.

The 'question time' is being organised by Churches Together in Cowbridge, and the discussion will be chaired by the Rev David Boult.

Questions will be welcomed on all aspects of the general election campaign.

Spokeswoman Sue Freeland said: "At the time of writing this I can confirm that Alun Cairns (Conservative), Chris Elmore (Labour), Ian Johnson (Plaid Cymru) and David Morgan (Liberal Democrats), have all confirmed that they can attend. Kevin Mahoney (UKIP) is hoping to be able to come.

"Unfortunately, Alan Armstrong (Green) and Steve Reed (Cannabis is Safer than Alcohol) are unable to attend but have been invited to send a written statement".

The husting is free and open to all.

Call goes out to kitchen gardeners

AMATEUR gardeners and allotment holders are being invited to show off their produce this year at Bridgend's biggest country fair.

The Kitchen, Garden and Allotment Show will be part of the Bridgend County Show at Pencoed College (July 10-12).

Spokesman John Howley said: "Do you ever feel like entering one of those 'traditional' summer allotment and gardening shows but are put off by the idea of aggressive competition?

"Are you restricted to a small back-garden or growing on a patio? Would you like to just take along whatever you or your family have grown and maybe share tips with fellow gardeners in a relaxed setting?

"Would you like to taste some 'plot-to-pot' food and sample home-made wine in the company of other like-minded folk?

"If this is you, come along to the first-ever Bridgend Kitchen, Garden and Allotment Show.

"We welcome entries from vegetable growers, flower arrangers, bakers and makers, arts and crafters".

The County Show, of course, has something for everyone including:– trade stands, craft stalls, show jumping, dog show, poultry show, rabbits and goats – plus this new section.

John Howley said: "Programme, entry details and further information can be obtained by email (*ejohnhowley@btinternet.com*).

"Please note that all profits from our part of the show will be donated to a local registered charity".

COMMUNITY NEWS

Your local correspondent is
NANCY DAVIDGE
"Tynewydd", Llangan.
(01656) 860303
TREOES, LLANGAN & ST MARY HILL

Saron chapel

THE service held at Saron chapel, Treoes on Sunday, April 19 was well attended by residents from Treoes, Coychurch, Llangan and St Mary Hill.

It was a special occasion for Gloria and Tom Harry of St Mary Hill, as the officiating cleric Rev Trevor Harry is a close relative.

Readers of my weekly column are aware of the problems in raising cash for the upkeep of Saron chapel and the vestry. A 100 Club has been formed, which will help both. This has been met with great enthusiasm and has received overwhelming support from the local community.

Three draws will take place, the first draw will take place in May; the second in October, and the third in December. Please call Barbara Grigg on 01656 650398 for further information.

Reminder

ST Canna's, Llangan will be holding a summer fayre on Saturday, April 25 at 10am. Everyone welcome.

Elasto Lane

THE road leading from the Llangan Road to the Fferm Goch area has become dangerous, with many deep potholes and slippery conditions in rainy weather.

Follow The GEM on Twitter - *@gem_news*
We're also on Facebook - *facebook.com/GlamorganGEM*

Yin, yang, and the five elements

THE April meeting of Southerndown WI was well attended.

The vice-president, Pam, updated everyone on current activities, including a request from Glamorgan Federation for people to join various sub committees to assist with the organisation of future events.

Some time was spent discussing the resolution that will go forward to the Annual Meeting in London on June 4.

For the centenary year, the resolution concerns 'Failing to Care – Assessment of Need in Long-term Care' and calls on the government to remove the distinction between nursing and personal care in the assessment of the needs of individuals. Following a vote, it was agreed that our delegate would vote in favour of the resolution at the annual meeting.

Our speaker for the evening was one of our members, Michele, who gave a fascinating talk on Chinese medicine. By the end of the talk, we were all familiar with Yin and Yang and the interacting relationship of the five elements of wood, fire, earth, metal and water and how each element influences particular internal organs in our body.

We also learnt how specific areas of our tongue relate to our heart and lungs, our stomach or our kidneys and we were shown a simple relaxation exercise that I'm sure we've all been practising regularly!

Time, however, did not allow for a demonstration of acupuncture, although different techniques were explained. Thank you, Michele.

The meeting in May is the annual meeting of Southerndown WI when all committee members will stand down and a new president and committee will be appointed. Members are encouraged to consider joining the committee for a year, as it gives members a different perspective on the WI and enables them to use their existing skills in a new way.

At the meeting, in St Brides Major Church Hall at 7.15pm on Thursday, May 14, a plate supper will be provided and we will welcome our adviser, Marilyn Tucker, who will preside over the formal part of the meeting. We look forward to seeing all members on that evening.

PM

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MAN IS JAILED FOR SEXUAL OFFENCES AGAINST CHILDREN

A MAN has been jailed for more than 13 years, following a number of sexual offences against young children.

William Blower (66) from Maesteg, was sentenced on Thursday, April 16 for seven counts of indecent assault on a child and two offences of indecency with a child. He has been placed on the Sex Offenders Register for life.

The offences occurred between July 1971 and April 1984. Investigating officer DC Rebecca Merchant said: "William Blower's offending spanned 13 years and was of the most serious degree. He deliberately took advantage of children in order to satisfy his own sexual gratification.

"The victims have been haunted by what William Blower did to them for over 40 years, and they are still suffering the psychological effects of his actions.

"We want to take this opportunity to thank the victims and witnesses in this case for showing tremendous bravery in coming forward after such a long time, and then giving evidence against him.

"It is down to their courage, and their courage alone, that he is now facing a long time behind bars."

DC Merchant added: "South Wales Police always takes every allegation of sexual abuse extremely seriously. We hope this conviction serves as an important message to people who have been the victim of crimes such as these, that they can come forward, regardless of when the offence occurred.

"If you have been a victim, or know someone who has been, please get in touch with us on 101 and help us bring the offender to justice."

***Above:* WILLIAM BLOWER**

Man is sentenced for £40k tax fraud

A self-employed construction worker from Barry, who lied about his income in an attempt to steal £30,000 of income tax, has been sentenced after an investigation by HM Revenue and Customs.

Investigators found that Ashley Williams, 23, put false information on his self-assessment tax return, so that he could fraudulently claim back £30,714 in tax.

He was sentenced to eight months imprisonment, suspended for 18 months, when he appeared at Cardiff Crown Court on April 16.

Williams must repay £8,496 to HMRC, including £2,000 within 21 days, and also complete 120 hours of unpaid work.

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VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

VALE OF GLAMORGAN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE FORUM

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is beginning the process of reappointing the statutory Local Access Forum, as required under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The Forum will consist of between 12 and 22 members. Membership will be for a three year period from the date of the first meeting.

The function of the Forum is to advise the Local Authority, Natural Resources Wales and others, as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area.

It is anticipated that the first meeting of the reappointed Forum will take place in June 2015. Meetings generally take place on a quarterly basis at a time and place agreed by the Forum members. It is important that members attempt to attend all meetings, as deputies will not be permitted. These are unpaid positions but Forum members will be able to claim reasonable expenses.

Any person wishing to be considered for membership can obtain further details and an application form by writing to

Jeff Wyatt,
Secretary, Local Access Forum,
Vale of Glamorgan Council,
Civic Offices,
Holton Road,
Barry, CF63 4RU.

Alternatively, details can be obtained by e-mailing **jrwyatt@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk**

Completed application forms must be returned by 8th May, 2015.

VALE of GLAMORGAN
BRO MORGANNWG

FROM COWBRIDGE TO LONDON, HOPING NOT TO KEEP THE BRIDE WAITING...

Bridegroom Luke will cycle 193 miles, to get to the church on time!

ABOVE (left to right): Freddie Hitchcock; James Mordecai; Julian Hitchcock; Luke English; Martin England; Nigel England and Oliver Ladbrooke-Davies are among the group preparing for the cycle ride.

LUKE ENGLAND and fiancée, Harriet Clarke, have been eagerly looking forward to their big day, but a boozy night out has thrown their wedding plans up in the air!

Luke's mother Marianne England explains: "Having been at a Velindre fundraiser, we got chatting (after a lot of alcohol had been consumed!) and decided how fantastic it would be to be able to cycle to London for his wedding, all in aid of Velindre.

"It's a cause that's very close to our hearts so any opportunity to raise money for the charity is always taken up by our close friends.

"So the groom, family and friends will be cycling nearly 200 miles from Cowbridge to London!"

Luke's father, Nigel England, Julian Hitchcock, Freddie Hitchcock, James Mordecai, Oliver Ladbrooke-Davies, Martyn England, Fraser Clarke and Josh Clarke are charged with making sure the groom gets to the church on time!

At 9am on Wednesday, April 29, the group will enjoy a hearty breakfast at the Bear Hotel in Cowbridge, before setting off on their challenge four days before the wedding and are aiming to arrive the day before the ceremony, which takes place on Saturday, May 2 at Fulham Palace.

Their route takes in Day 1: Cowbridge – Bath, Day 2: Bath – Windsor, Day 3: Windsor – Fulham.

Head of fundraising at Velindre, Andrew Morris, said: "The support Velindre has received from the Bearback Riders over the years has been amazing, but this latest exploit is truly incredible.

"Lots of people have crazy ideas after a few drinks, but very few follow it through – we are really grateful to Luke and Harriet and the group for this wonderful gesture, and hope lots of people will support them at the website: www.justgiving.com/Luke-England1."

Amazingly, the cyclists have already raised sponsorship of £15,000, and more is coming in every day!

Andrew Morris added: "Cancer survival rates have doubled in the last 40 years because of better treatments and earlier detection, helped by Velindre's fundraising campaigns."

People can show their support for the campaign by visiting www.velindrefundraising.com/victoryovercancer.

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Hard pressed ambulance service's appeal to time wasters...

'Don't call 999 unless it's a REAL medical emergency!'

THE over-stretched Welsh Ambulance Service is urging people not to call 999 "unless it is a real emergency".

The service took 19,151 non-urgent calls in the last seven months – just 318 of which required an ambulance – and none resulted in a patient being taken to hospital.

One woman called 999 because her athlete's foot infection had worsened, and a man wanted dental work for two broken teeth!

Other examples of time-wasting calls:

'*Athletes foot infection – worsened,*' August 2014, Conwy.

'*Two cotton buds stuck in ear*,' November 2014, Cardiff.

'*Dancing too much – sprained ankle*,' September 2014, Llandudno.

'*Got two broken teeth – wants dental work*,' December 2014, Dolgellau.

'*Tried to eat a scotch bonnet chilli pepper, face burning*,' October 2014, Pontypool.

'*Male feeling knackered*,' September 2014, Abergele.

'*Hasn't had any food since yesterday and feeling sick*,' December 2014, Pentre (Rhondda Cynon Taf).

'*Has trouble to walk, blisters on feet*,' August 2014, Cardiff.

'*Had tooth out and now in pain*,' November 2014, Pontypridd.

Richard Lee, the Trust's Head of Clinical Services, said: "The Trust is taking steps to ensure that patients only travel to hospital when absolutely necessary and are referred on to the right part of NHS Wales, where this is safe and clinically appropriate.

"While the majority of calls we receive via 999 are entirely appropriate, we also take some non-essential calls from people with colds, toothache, back ache and other minor conditions.

"Calls of this type put people's lives at risk as the ambulance attending that patient is not available for a serious road accident, heart attack or stroke.

"For advice and treatment of most illnesses, visit your GP, or call NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47 for confidential health advice and information. NHS Direct Wales is available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

"*Please remember to only dial 999 in a life-threatening emergency, if someone is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk*."

Daffodil Week boost for Marie Curie charity

VAL FINUCANE organised the Daffodil Week collections in Cowbridge and the rest of the Vale, with collecting boxes left with many shops, coffee shops and pubs. She believes that this year will produce a record result.

Caffé Nero of Cowbridge were the winners after collecting over £90.

The photo shows a representative of Caffé Nero being presented with a prize by the committee chairman of the Cowbridge fundraising group.

Special family fun day at Ysgol y Deri

FAMILIES with disabled children in the Vale enjoyed activities during the sport and play family fun day at Ysgol y Deri over the Easter holidays.

The Vale Council's Sport and Play team joined forces with the Family Information Service and Ysgol y Deri, which is part of Penarth Learning Community, to provide a day of sport and play activities for families whose children attend schools in the Vale.

Over 40 families took part in clay modelling, flower pot decorating, and a range of sports.

The Really Wild Show was also on hand with a range of animals, encouraging children to hold them whilefinding out about their natural habitats.

One of the aims was to introduce families to its school and the facilities.

The state-of-the art sports hall, includes a floor that lifts up to reveal a number of trampolines.

There was also an opportunity for the children to see how hard they could strike a football with Powershot Wales, who presented medals and prizes to the children who took part.

One parent said: "Thank you so much for such a lovely family day. It was so lovely to see my child so happy in school and for his sisters to see his school and have fun with him. These sorts of experiences are invaluable in raising his self-esteem and attitude towards school."

The Family Fun Day was helped by funding from the Vale Council, Welsh Government Securing Play Opportunities funding and the Out Of School grant scheme, all of which were key in making the day a success.

For more information on Disability Sport and Play Opportunities, visit www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/sportsandplay or call 01446 704748.

'More allotments are needed' – *says local councillor*

PLAID Cymru councillor Ian Johnson has called on the Vale of Glamorgan to increase its supply of allotments as recently published figures show more than 700 on waiting lists for Vale allotment space – with more than 600 of those in Barry.

He said: "The Vale Council has more than 700 names on its allotment waiting list, with more than 600 in Barry alone.

"Allotments help us with sustainability in the environment. They are green lungs in an urban environment, and can reduce waste from packaging and food miles from farm to fork.

"Gardening can also help improve mental as well as physical well-being and help people to live an active and healthy lifestyle, whatever their age.

"It is important that the council meets this currently unmet need in Barry."

EASTER EGG HUNT CRACKS RECORD!

EASTER sunshine saw a record number of families taking part in the Easter Egg Trial at Cosmeston Lakes and Porthkerry Country Parks, when over 1,300 eager Easter egg hunters visited the two parks across the weekend.

Participants collected their maps, found the Easter egg posts, and answered the 10 questions to complete the trail and claim their bag of chocolate goodies.

The Easter egg hunt trail, which has been held at Cosmeston Lakes and Porthkerry for the last four years, has become more and more successful each year.

Aaron Jones, park ranger, said: "This year was such a success, and we'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who took part.

"We look forward to holding the Easter trail again next year for all you egg hunters!"

NEWS IN BRIEF

Volunteer befrienders

IF you are an older person who feels isolated in Llantwit Major, Cowbridge and the western Vale, Age Connects Cardiff and the Vale Good Neighbours can help with volunteer befrienders, a regular phone-link contact, and some transport needs.

The Llantwit Major office is open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 10am and 1pm. for all enquiries; or phone Bridget Palmer, Volunteer Coordinator on 01446 795549 (email bridget.palmer@ageconnectscardiff.org.uk).

Spring market

HIGH Street traders in Barry are holding a spring market on Saturday, May 16.

It runs from 10am to 4pm.

For more information, call either 01446 677010, or 01446 704788.

'Sing for water'

A MASSED choir of 700 singers will come together to help transform lives in Ghana – by 'singing for water' at an event on Roald Dahl Plas (the Oval Basin, Cardiff Bay) on Sunday, May 31.

For more information and to take part, see www.singforwatercardiff.org.

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Vale parliamentary candidates explain why they should be elected the local MP on May 7

by ALAN ARMSTRONG, THE GREEN PARTY

Global warming could have devastating effects for future generations. To avoid this requires urgent action, otherwise, within 50 years, the UK could face catastrophic consequences. Concern for future generations is the reason I am standing in this election.

The Green Party is the only party that appreciates the need for radical change. The party has a cohesive set of policies designed to achieve a sustainable society characterised by social justice, a fair distribution of resources, and based on a clean-energy economy.

On a personal note, I have had a long career in social work. I am skilled at helping people resolve problems. As your MP, I would work hard to address the problems that adversely affect your well-being.

If you share my concerns for the future, and want an MP who will raise these concerns at the highest level, while meeting the needs of his constituents, vote for me.

by ALUN CAIRNS, WELSH CONSERVATIVE PARTY

It has been a privilege to serve the constituents of the Vale of Glamorgan since being elected in 2010. I have tried to achieve two main objectives locally – champion the area, and help local people who have been let down by the system.

Recently, I played a central role in securing the new fairground as part of the regeneration of Barry Island. I pushed hard to secure the deal, because I was certain that it would deliver such a major jobs boost for Barry and the wider Vale.

In the space of just a few weeks, we have seen an incredible start to the season, and it is just the start.

I have had the opportunity to help, often in a small way, many wonderful people over the past five years.

If I am re-elected on May 7, I will continue to offer my support to my fellow residents in the Vale, no matter what the issue may be.

by CHRIS ELMORE, WELSH LABOUR

I'm standing to be your MP to make the Vale a fairer place. With 10,000 residents being supported by foodbanks and the poorest in our society being hit with a VAT rise and the 'bedroom tax', things need to change.

A Labour Government will scrap the bedroom tax, freeze energy bills until 2017, raise the minimum wage, and cut taxes for those on low and middle incomes.

I moved to Barry when I was a teenager, and have stayed here ever since. Being active in the community is important to me; I am chair of trustees at the Barry YMCA, a school governor, and work with groups such as Communities First and Flying Start. I started my life training as a butcher; I now work full time representing my local area as a councillor.

I will be a strong local voice for the Vale. Vote Labour for a fairer future.

by IAN JOHNSON, PLAID CYMRU, THE PARTY OF WALES

Plaid Cymru wants to see a successful Wales and a prosperous Vale of Glamorgan.

We will ensure that Wales gets the same deal as Scotland. That would mean an extra £1.2 billion pounds per year – £400 extra for every person in Wales – to improve our public services. With this money we can save and strengthen our NHS by training and recruiting more doctors and nurses.

We want to see investment in services, not cuts; and an end to the cruel 'bedroom tax' that affects almost 1,000 families in the Vale.

Having made Barry a regeneration town when in government, Plaid Cymru will prioritise investment in Barry to create jobs and opportunities on Barry Island, the Waterfront, Holton Road and the High Street.

Plaid Cymru has opposed housing over-development in the Vale's Local Development Plan, pushed for a moratorium on fracking, and fought against cuts to library services.

by KEVIN MAHONEY UKIP

As the only Vale councillor to refuse all pay rises since being elected, as well as taking a further substantial, voluntary cut to my allowance, in empathy with council and private sector workers who are undergoing reductions in hours and wages, I feel I have shown my independence and determination to represent Vale residents' interests, rather than myself.

UKIP's main policies include a sensible, points-based immigration system, ending mass, uncontrolled immigration, which creates unsustainable pressures on housing, health, education and social welfare budgets.

We would scrap the unfair 'bedroom tax' and zero-hour contracts. We are the one party to stand up and support, by practical costed measures, our Armed Forces, while in service, and their continued welfare and wellbeing after leaving the Forces.

UKIP believes money raised in this country needs to be spent here, helping improve the lives of the people who earned and raised that money.

by DAVID MORGAN, WELSH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

Liberal Democrats in Government have cut income tax by £800 for over a million workers.

We've also ensured the biggest ever rise in the state pension via our triple-lock.

We've provided funding for schools via the pupil premium/pupil deprivation grant and already provided up to £2,000 tax-free for child care.

In future, we'll protect the education budget from cradle to college, and increase the NHS budget by £8 billion, so Wales can also benefit.

In Government, we will balance the budget by 2018, cut income tax by a further £400, ensure more nurses on the wards, provide better mental health services, and an increased budget for the NHS.

We will extend the pupil premium/PDG to £2,500 per pupil, and deliver on fairer funding and devolved powers to Wales.

by STEVEN REED, CANNABIS IS SAFER THAN ALCOHOL

I represent the Cannabis Is Safer Than Alcohol Party (CISTA), which campaigns for a Royal Commission to review UK cannabis law.

We support a harm-reduction programme, seeking a regulated market to protect cannabis users from contact with criminal gangs that supply hard drugs.

Taxing cannabis sales could raise £1 billion to fund drug education programmes, police and the NHS; 85 per cent of voters believe the war on drugs is failing, costing lives, and criminalising otherwise good citizens.

To be your MP will be a privilege. MPs should only be paid for attendance in Parliament – no holiday/sick pay/pension.

For: EU referendum; proportional representation; minimum wage £8 per hour; road and rail investment; increased budgets for Armed Services, NHS, police and social housing.

Against: HS2, Trident, library cuts, tax evasion, zero hour contracts, 'bedroom tax', poverty.

I will fight for all angry voters demanding change Vote CISTA .

Performers head for Dance World Cup

HUW BOUCHER, (12) from Penarth, won a gold medal for his ballet solo at the Bristol Eisteddfod.

He also won a trophy for the highest marks which entered him into the semi finals of the All England competition where he will be joined by Alys Thomas.

Huw is a pupil of Moya Vahey School of Russian Classical Ballet based in BIJOU, Cowbridge. Alys is trained by Ella Morgan in Pontyclun.

Both dancers are part of Team Wales who have reached the final of the Dance World Cup which takes place in Romania at the end of June.

Team Wales are very grateful for the money raised by the staff at the Co-Op in Cowbridge, Watts & Morgan and Cowbridge Rotary club.

MV

NEWS IN BRIEF

Elijah concert

CARDIFF Bach Choir with New Bristol Sinfonia will perform *Elijah* by Felix Mendelssohn on April 25 (7.30pm) at Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, with conductor Tim Taylor and Paul Carey Jones as *Elijah*. Tickets available on 029 2039 1391.

RNLI campaign

MAY 1, 2 and 3 will see the launch of a nationwide campaign in aid of the RNLI when events will be taking place througout the country.

In Penarth there will be collections in the town centre and seafront on the Friday and Saturday, and there will be a 5km charity walk around Penarth on Sunday. To participate or assist, contact *rnlipenarth@hotmail.com*.

Have Blooming Great Tea Party for Marie Curie...

EVERYONE living with a terminal illness should have access to high quality care and support, which meets all of their needs. Marie Curie want people to be able to get the most from the time they have left.

The charity is for people living with cancer or any other terminal illness and their families.

The right care and support at the right time can make all the difference.

There are more than 140 Marie Curie nurses working in Wales, caring for around 2,300 terminally ill people and their families in their homes each year, with nearly 2,000 Marie Curie nurses working across the UK.

These nurses work night and day, in people's homes, providing hands-on care and vital emotional support.

The Marie Curie Hospice in Penarth cares for around 1,200 people each year, some staying in the hospice for specialist round-the-clock care, others coming in for the day to use the hospice's services.

The charity also supports people throughout their illness by giving practical information and guidance, support from trained volunteers and being there when someone wants to talk.

Not least, they are a leader in research into better care for terminally ill people, a major centre is the Marie Curie Palliative Care Research Centre, Cardiff.

Over the last 60 years, they have helped hundreds of thousands of people and families. The ageing population means more and more people are living with a terminal illness.

Even now, carers say seven out of every 10 people with a terminal illness don't get all the care and support they need. Marie Curie do not think that's good enough. They think more has to be done and are asking for your support to make that possible.

Could you host or attend a Blooming Great Tea Party between June 20 and 29 to raise funds for the charity at your house, a friend's house or anywhere you like?

Last year, the Blooming Great Tea Party raised £667,000 across the UK, which paid for 33,350 hours of vital nursing care.

You can sign up to host your Blooming Great Tea Party at www.mariecurie.org.uk/teatime; you can also contact the West Wales fundraising office on 01554 759071 or westwalesfundraising@mariecurie.org.uk for advice.

Please share your event details, photos with them or get involved on social media using #BloomingGreat.

To get help from the Marie Curie Nursing Service, talk to your GP, district nurse or discharge nurse. For other support, visit www.mariecurie.org.uk or the Marie Curie Support Line 0800 090 2309 (open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday – calls from landlines are free, but there may be a charge if you're calling from a mobile).

Music in Hospitals set to return to the wards!

MUSIC IN HOSPITALS is returning to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board for the second year running.

It sets out to improve the quality of life of adults with all kinds of illness and disability in hospitals, hospices, day care centres and nursing homes through the joy and therapeutic benefits of professionally performed live music.

Robert Aitken CBE, Director, Music in Hospitals Wales, said: "It is always a pleasure to work with people who value the importance of integrating the arts into healthcare, ultimately enhancing the patient experience. We hope to continue our partnership with Cardiff and Vale Health charity for many years to come."

Simone Joslyn, Clinical Project Lead, said: "We aim to bring music to patients, in particular vulnerable adults and young people, especially those who really appreciate some distraction on wards as they are often unable to leave. Music helps boost patient and staff morale.

"It's great to see patients and visitors enjoying themselves, tapping along to the beat of the music and getting involved in the performance."

Concerts will take place throughout the year at St David's Hospital, Barry Hospital, University Hospital of Wales, Whitchurch Hospital, Iorwerth Jones Centre, Rookwood Hospital, and University Hospital, Llandough.

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Branch Manager Phil Powell feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service the Vale, Bridgend, RCT and Porthcawl areas and Phil is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. *"The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."*

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Phil a call for a free quotation on **0800 61 21 118** and he'll be happy to help!

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IOLO'S DRUMMING MARATHON PAYS OFF FOR WATER CHARITY

Report by PHILIP IRWIN

IOLO WHELAN, the Vale musician who marked his 40th birthday by drumming non-stop for 40 hours – is now happily recovering – helped by the knowledge that he has almost doubled his fundraising target!

Iolo played drums and percussion for 40 hours, from 8am on Friday, April 17, until midnight on April 18.

His sister Luned said: "He declared himself to be feeling great, and proceeded to have a dance with his wife Rachel, who was the first to congratulate him at the end of the challenge.

"He would like to thank all the team who helped him before, during and after the event, and everyone who has supported the cause of his chosen charity, WaterAid in many different ways.

"The running total now is over £7,000 and is still rising. Iolo reached his target of £4,000 shortly before midnight on Saturday, which was a cause for great celebration among the audience!"

Iolo's marathon took place in a unique location, in a roundhouse in the St Hilary area (*right*). Iolo told The GEM: "When we finished university, I and three friends decided to build an Iron Age roundhouse, using as many traditional materials as possible."

When they completed the task, rather than rest on their laurels, they decided they could do better, so they knocked it down, started again and built the existing structure.

It made for a unique venue for an occasion where Iolo was joined (at various times) by friends and family from around the Vale.

It is still possible to donate, to the address www.justgiving.com/TheBigBash2015.

ABOVE: Just over 27 hours into the challenge and Iolo is still going strong. *Photograph by* ***Mandy Thomas (wwwmandythomasphotography.co.uk).***

LLANCARFAN JUMBLE SALE

LLANCARFAN Ladies Tuesday Club are holding their annual jumble sale (raising cash for local charities) on April 25 at 1.30pm (no entrance fee) in Llancarfan village hall.

There will be a wide selection of good quality clothes, household, bric-a-brac, jewellery, toys and plants.

Beer is named after marathon man Mark

RIGHT: Mark Ley with his 'Marathon Man' beer.

BRAINS Brewery is set to release a limited edition beer to raise funds for its nominated charity, Tenovus Cancer Care.

Marathon Man is named in honour of Mark Ley, people trainer at Brains, who will run this year's London Marathon in support of the charity.

The beer Mark helped to create, is a 4.3 per cent American-style brown ale brewed at Brains' craft brewing extension Brains Craft Brewery. It will be stocked for a limited period in a selection of Brains' own pubs, starting with the Yard in Cardiff this week, and 25p from every pint sold will be donated to the charity.

Mark explained: "I am so happy that I was able to brew a beer in our Craft Brewery, and even happier that there will be a donation from sales of Marathon Man to Tenovus Cancer Care. Brewing the beer with our head brewer Bill Dobson was such a great experience, and the beer is looking and tasting great!

"Training for the marathon has been hard but I am really looking forward to running the London Marathon and hope to make a great contribution to Brains' fundraising effort for Tenovus Cancer Care."

Folk music workshops

THERE will be folk music workshops at Dinas Powys Fringe Festival on May 27.

Starting at 11am, Andy Clarke and Steve Tyler will be at the Murchfield Community Centre, Sunnycroft Lane, Dinas Powys, for the day.

There is also a folk/acoustic concert in the evening with Andy and Steve, Tom Fitton and Slipstone (Huw Chidgey and Mel Carew).

The workshops are free but places need to be booked on 07765 513424, www.ticketsource.co.uk/murchfieldcommunitycentre.

Shadows Club

THE South Wales Shadows Club's meeting is on May 12, in the Conservative Club, Stanwell Road, Penarth (Telephone 02920 309979).

Olympian Jamie will lead next Mair's Walk

HUNDREDS of walkers are set to embark on the ninth annual 'Mair's Walk' on Sunday, June 7 at 11am, to raise funds for the Stepping Stones Appeal, supporting lung cancer research at Velindre Cancer Centre.

This popular three-mile walk takes in stunning scenery from Bridgend Recreation Centre, through Newbridge Fields and the village of Merthyr Mawr, before ending the other side of the stepping stones crossing the river. It will be led by former Welsh and Olympic athlete Jamie Baulch.

Into its ninth year, the annual walk has raised £182,000, which has been key to funding specialised equipment and procedures at Velindre Cancer Centre that wouldn't have been possible without the fundraising efforts.

The walk is the brainchild of Mair ap Gruffudd, who had lung cancer and felt she needed to give something back to Velindre Cancer Centre after receiving excellent care.

On speaking to her oncologist, Dr Jason Lester, the Stepping Stones Appeal was born – taking its name from the fact that each step from diagnosis and treatment to finding a cure is a stepping stone, as well as the walk finishing up at the stepping stones at Ogmore Farm, Ogmore-by-Sea.

The afternoon is filled with entertainment for the whole family including music, hog roast, bouncy castle, face painting, a bar, raffle and much more!

Register by May 1 to receive a free walk t-shirt. Entry is £10 per person and children under 16 are free. Fancy dress is optional and there is a prize for the best outfit.

Entry forms are available from: The Bridgend Foot Clinic, 5 Nolton Street, Bridgend CF311BX, telephone 01656 766446; James Mordecau, HRT Estate Agents, The Tool House, 1 Derwen Road, Bridgend CF31 1LH; or book online at: www.velindrefundraising.com/bookonline.

You can also register on the day of the walk. Registration will be open from 9.30am at Bridgend Recreation Centre.

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MPN's Best in Wales for the fourth time!

...Six-times World Snooker Champion presents award

Local home improvement company, MPN Windows has once again been named 'Best in Wales' for customer satisfaction, meaning the family-run company has now collected this award an impressive four times!

MPN's trophy comes from the independent window installers' organisation Network VEKA, a unique, sectoral standards organisation that only accepts the very best, most professional window and door companies, and then makes sure they stay the best. All prospective members undergo rigorous vetting before being accepted and must agree to regular audits and training. In this way, Network VEKA can be so confident in the quality of its members' work that every one is able to offer the organisation's ten year insurance-backed guarantee.

The results are calculated from the customer satisfaction feedback of nearly 16,000 households across Britain and Ireland: every customer of every member company for the whole year.

The trophy was presented at Network VEKA's AGM in Stratford-upon-Avon, by the organisation's Brand Ambassador Steve Davis.

The Six-Times World Snooker Champion told the MPN team: " As a Network VEKA member, you are competing against the best of the best - so to win 'Best in Wales' for a fourth time really is a fantastic achievement. Your customers obviously appreciate all your hard work."

Pictured: Melanie and Paul Webster with Steve Davis.

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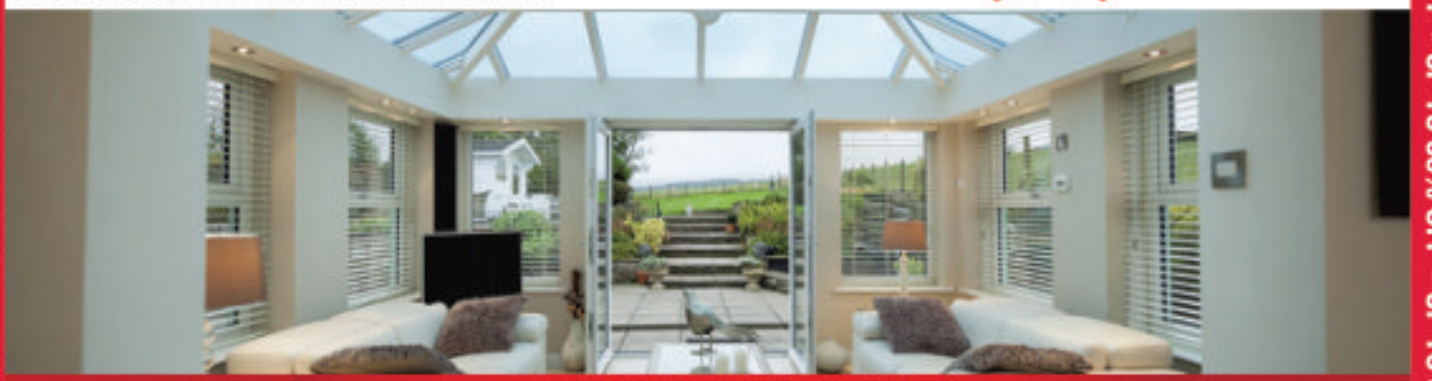

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Readers' Letters

Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, at Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL or email gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

LETTERS AND E-MAILS MUST INCLUDE FULL ADDRESS AND A CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER

IMPORTANT: We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail. An email address alone is not sufficient!
We will (*in certain circumstances*)protect a writer's identity, if requested.

'Congratulations to Vale's talented youngsters…'

An outstanding musical triumph for local schools

I WOULD like to congratulate the young people of the Vale of Glamorgan who have yet again won national recognition for their outstanding success in the field of music.

Saturday night saw Ysgol Iolo Morgannwg win the finals of a competition to find the best primary school choir in Wales. The standard of all the choirs in the final on S4C was absolutely amazing, but the performance of our own Welsh medium school was flawless – a great success following their win as best choir on Songs of Praise.

The choir Heol y March followed this by winning the senior choir competition staged by S4C on Sunday evening .

These young singers were again from The Vale of Glamorgan. The conductor of both these choirs was Eleri Roberts, and how fortunate are we to have such an eminent music teacher to work with our young people in the Vale. We owe her a great deal.

If you have never heard either of these wonderful choirs, look out for any possible occasions to hear them that might arise!

My thanks to all involved in two evenings of superb entertainment.
Gwen Baty,
Cowbridge.

Is this the future for our NHS?

WITH the NHS being at the forefront of the general election debate, it was interesting that on a recent visit to my GP's surgery to find that the list of private health charges had been moved from an obscure part of the waiting room to a very prominent position.

This new, highlighted, notice advertised the present charges for private treatment, examples of which were consultation with either doctor or nurse... 10 minutes £30, 15 minutes £45, 30 minutes £90, and a home visit £100.

Could this notice reflect how GPs view the future of the Health Service, as they are all private practices funded, at present, by the NHS.

Think carefully how you use your vote, as the NHS is facing a very uncertain future.
CW Wright,
Barry.

Who creates the wealth?

IN the 19th century, because he owned some south Wales coal mines and Cardiff docks, the Marquis of Bute made more money out of every ton of coal exported than all the miners and dockers involved put together.

Since he also owned a vast number of homes in Cardiff, for which citizens paid rent all their lives, dying as poor as when they were born, he prospered hugely.

And we all know how he chose to spend all that wealth which had been torn from beneath the earth.

This is what Conservatives seek to conserve today – that the 'Super Rich' shall control society, to the detriment of all the rest of us.

If you are foolish enough to believe such irrational economics, then the Marquis, like today's Super Rich, is the 'Wealth Creator', not the miners who risked their lives digging coal.
Neville Westerman,
Brynna.

Chance to show off your garden

WITH spring in full swing and the lighter evenings here to stay, I wanted to encourage your readers to get back in their gardens over the months ahead in order to make the most of their outdoor spaces.

I have been gardening for over 50 years and love nothing more than spending a few hours pottering around in the garden or allotment, making the most of these wonderful spring evenings.

With the great outdoors very much in mind, I have recently collaborated with National Trust Wales, who have just launched a new national competition called #NTWalesGardenProud, which aims to get people across the Vale to showcase and share their outdoor spaces via social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

To win an exclusive half-day consultation with a National Trust Wales gardener, as well as a whole host of other 'money can't buy' National Trust Wales prizes, all your readers need to do is simply submit photos of their outdoor spaces by posting to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram using the hashtag #NTWalesGardenProud. Alternatively, email entries to gardenproud@workingword.co.uk

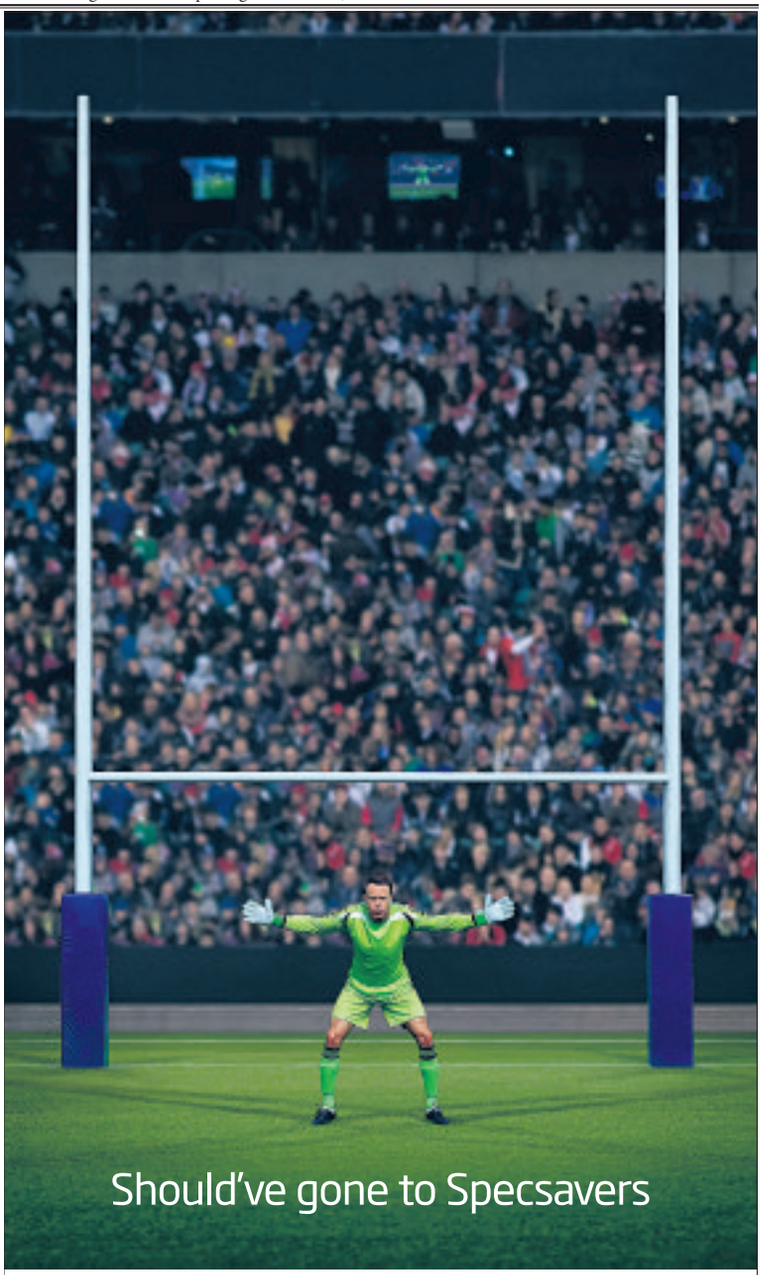
Why not pop along one day to Dyffryn Gardens to see the beautiful grounds bloom into life and get some inspiration for your next gardening project?
Terry Walton,
BBC Radio Wales.

'Take your dog poo home with you!'

I WOULD like to dispel the myth that there is a dog poo fairy. If you pick up your dog mess in a black tie plastic bag in the Maes Glas area, please take it home with you.

Dumping it on people's front gardens is unacceptable; why should someone else be responsible for it? It is your responsibility!

You have gone to the trouble of picking the mess up; deal with it with consideration for others.
Chris Goring,
Barry.



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Parkinson's group sessions

THE first self-management group by Parkinson's UK will launch in Bridgend on Tuesday, June 2, with one session per week for six weeks (from 1pm – 3.30pm) at the Care & Repair offices, Brocastle Manor.

People with Parkinson's, partner or carer ,can meet like-minded people, to discuss daily living with Parkinson's.

The sessions are free of charge, but participants must book a place by calling 02079 633924, or email selfmanagement@parkinsons.org.uk.

Defibrillator training

A defibrillator is to be donated to The Paget Rooms in Penarth by Welsh Hearts/Calonnau Cymru, The Heart Charity for Wales, which is holding a free CPR and defibrillator training session at the Paget Rooms on Tuesday, June 9 (7pm to 9pm).

"Welsh Hearts, in partnership with strategic partners, aims to equip people with emergency vital life saving skills and the knowledge and actions that could save a life," a spokesperson explains.

"Training will be given in CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resusitation), a first aid technique that is a combination of rescue breaths and chest compressions and training on how to use a defibrillator – a life saving machine used to shock a person's heart back into its normal rhythm after a cardiac arrest."

For more information, contact Welsh Hearts on 02920 786521 or email fundraising@welshhearts.org.

CCTV arrests in the Vale

THE Vale of Glamorgan Council's CCTV team contacted police a total of 36 times during the week ending April 19.

On April 14, one person was arrested on Boverton Road in Llantwit Major for allegedly driving while disqualified. On the same day an arrest was made on Bassett Street in Barry concerning theft.

On April 16 one person was arrested on Holton Road, Barry, also concerning theft.

On April 19 one person was cautioned over possession of cannabis on Gladstone Road, Barry.

ELERI'S BOYS AND GIRLS SING OUT AND DO DOUBLE IN ABERYSTWYTH

IN a stunning weekend for local choral singing, two young choirs with strong Cowbridge connections won two national competitions on S4C – and both were conducted by Eleri Roberts from Welsh St Donats! ***writes PHILIP IRWIN***

First, on Saturday, April 18, the school choir from Ysgol Iolo Morganwg became the top primary school choir in Wales in S4C's Côr Cymru Cynradd 2015.

This followed on from the school's triumph last year in the UK-wide Junior Songs of Praise competition.

(A full report on the school's S4C win is on this page (*right*).

Then, the following evening (April 19) Côr Heol y March, Eleri Roberts' children's choir based near Welsh St Donats, beat 'grown up' choirs to win the coveted Côr Cymru (Choir of Wales) prize in the competition's final, which was televised live on S4C from Aberystwyth.

Eight Ysgol Iolo Morganwg pupils are members of both successful choirs.

After being one of only four children's choirs selected from all over Wales in the preliminary round earlier this year, and then winning the children's choir category semi-final a few weeks ago, Côr Heol y March competed against the winners of the other semi-finals – the youth choir, male voice choir, ladies choir and mixed voice choir categories – in the grand final.

The other finalists were: the winner of the mixed category, Cywair of Newcastle Emlyn; Parti Llwchwr women's choir from Loughor; youth choir category winner Ysgol Gerdd Ceredigion; and the winner of the male voice choir category, Bechgyn Bro Taf from Cardiff.

A panel of international judges awarded the first prize to Côr Heol y March for their "convincing" and "musical" performance of five songs sung in Welsh, English, Latin, and Japanese!

Choir conductor Eleri Roberts said: "The children have worked really hard over the last few months to win this prize, which is regarded as the biggest honour for Welsh choirs.

"It's incredible that a group of children aged 16 and under, with the youngest members being only eight years old, have achieved this and I am so proud of them!

"I also want to thank all the parents especially Alison Huw, Karen Lewis and Rhian Fenn, and our accompanists Ieuan Jones and Eluned Pierce"

Côr Heol y March now hold two prestigious titles – Côr Cymru 2015, and Children's Choir of the World 2014, which they won at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod last July.

The evening was presented by broadcasters Morgan Jones and Heledd Cynwal.

Côr Cymru presenter Heledd Cynwal said: "It's a wonderful experience to host this competition, which is exciting and multi-layered. Unlike the National Eisteddfod, the international judges are blind to the initial auditions and every choir begins with a clean slate – that's what makes Côr Cymru unique.

"Seeing the choirs mixing backstage is very rewarding, and it's great that they receive immediate feedback from the judges."

Elen Rhys, S4C content commissioner entertainment said: "Many congratulations to Côr Heol y March and indeed to all the choirs who took part this year. We had an unforgettable night of passionate singing by different choirs and it just goes to show that Wales really is the land of song.

"This competition is going from strength to strength and I wish the winners all the very best for the future."

The competition has been held every two years since 2003.

ABOVE: It's Sunday night and Côr Heol y March celebrate their victory.
BELOW: Eleri Roberts and Ysgol Iolo pupils are the winners on Saturday night.

Iolo Morganwg celebrate!

THE small choir of Ysgol Iolo Morganwg showed they are true champions, winning the final of Côr Cymru Cynradd 2015.

Competing against the three other finalists, Llangennech Juniors Choir, Ysgol Gymraeg Teilo Sant and Cor Ysgol y Wern, the Iolo choir, led by their enthusiastic conductor, Mrs Eleri Roberts, and accompanied by Mrs Catrin Thomas on piano, sang four songs in front of a large audience at the Aberystwyth Arts Centre.

The competition final was also televised live on S4C on the evening of Saturday, April 18.

The children had promised beforehand to "sing like they had never sung before" and this was certainly true on the night. Their nerves held strong and they looked like they were thoroughly enjoying their performance.

Caryl Parry Jones, a commentator in the competition said, "They looked mischievous before they had even started singing and that was reflected in the first song 'Swn' – a mischievous and mysterious piece"

The Côr Cymru Cynradd is a competition open to all primary school choirs in Wales and Ysgol Iolo Morganwg qualified for the final in December last year.

This was probably no surprise to the school, as the choir had won the National Songs of Praise Junior Choir competition only a few months earlier.

Côr Cymru Cynradd judges were Gareth Jones, musical director of Sinfonia Cymru, Mrs Zimfira Poloz, director of Hamilton Childrens Choir, Canada and Simon Carrington, Professor of Conducting at Yale University, USA.

Eleri had explained that just as the language is so important, the choirs technical abilities had to shine as well, to satisfy the international judges.

The Iolo choir, opened with 'Swn' a new song full of mischief and mystery. This was to show the many characters within the choir.

The second song, 'Si Hei Lwli Mabi' a simple, unaccompanied piece highlighted the pure music of the choir with long musical lines. The third song, 'Nos Da Nawr', again showed the character of the choir, creating a magical essence.

To close, the children performed 'Cydiwn Ddwylo' – World Peace, without doubt an emotional and powerful song with a clear message in the words.

As the result was announced, Simon Carrington said: "It had been a wonderful event and all schools sang to a high standard. The decision has been difficult, as all the children had sung from their hearts. Ysgol Iolo sang with flexibility and musicality".

Zimfira Poloz added "The choir produced organic, quality and acapella singing".

Emotions were running high on Saturday night and Eleri Roberts, the choir's leader, explained, "To get to the final of this competition was a tremendous result for this very young and small choir, many of the children are eight or nine years old and for many, it is their first time on a stage.

"The standard of the competition was very high and all the schools in the final sang incredibly well.

"The children sang their hearts out and I am very proud of them and thank them for all their hard work and dedication. They truly deserve their win".

Mrs Rhian Williams, headteacher at Ysgol Iolo, was also at the competition final and commented: "The support has been amazing tonight and the atmosphere electric. I'm incredibly proud of the children. They are young and yet so professional. They have taken the competition in their stride.

"Eleri is an amazing conductor. We are very grateful to have her as part of our school family. It's fantastic what the school choir has achieved in the last nine months – winning two national competitions.

"But the main point is that the children really enjoy their singing, it's an important part of our school culture".

What next? After the school has enjoyed the Côr Cymru Cynradd success, Eleri Roberts and the children will be preparing for a 'Celebrations' CD and concert featuring songs from both competitions and special guests.

The launch of the CD and concert will be held at Acapela, Pentyrch, Cardiff on the evening of June 18.

Tickets will be available from Ysgol Iolo Morgannwg on 01446 772358, or by email at yiolomorganwg@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk, so book your seat now for a very special performance.

Follow the CD and concert preparations on Twitter @ysgoliolo and catch the show again on S4C Clic Côr Cymru.

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Choir 'Maternal Harmony' is set for its second annual concert

A WOMEN'S choir based at Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, will hold its second annual concert next month.

Maternal Harmony was originally aimed at women with postnatal depression but also includes those with other mental health issues and family members wanting to support the cause.

It was set up by the Perinatal Response and Management Service (PRAMS) at Princess of Wales and won an ABMU chairman's award in its inaugural year.

PRAMS is a specialist mental health service offering assessment and treatment of mood disorders during and after pregnancy.

Women are given access to medication advice, home visits and antenatal and postnatal groups.

Perinatal nurse specialist Gail James said: "We have opened up the choir to people who don't have postnatal depression but do support the cause. Some, but not all of them, have other mental health issues.

"Being in the choir gives you focus and support. It gives you an interest in life and helps you feel part of something.

"The power of music can definitely make you feel better."

It has been a busy year for the choir, including performing at weddings, a gala dinner, a Swansea University conference and elsewhere.

Their second annual concert will take place in Grace Church, Bridgend, on Saturday, May 9.

Tickets cost £2.50, with children free, and are available by emailing Francesca.Fearn@wales.nhs.uk. Anyone interested in joining the choir can go along to a rehearsal in the Princess of Wales Hospital on Thursday nights from 7pm-9pm.

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

New self storage company has confidence in Bridgend

THE leading storage experts, Dainton Self Storage, have chosen Bridgend county borough as the ideal location their first site in Wales, and it will be open in May.

The company has bought a10.5 acre brown field site on Coity Road, and is investing a further £300,000 to bring "fantastic" new self storage facilities to Bridgend, just a couple of minutes' drive from the town centre.

A company spokesman said: "The site will be well positioned to serve not only the commercial and domestic market of Bridgend but most of Mid Glamorgan".

Secure storage units will range in size from 35 sq ft to 320 sq ft, making them ideal for storing anything from a few boxes to the contents of a large five bedroom house.

Dainton Self Storage will also be offering secure external storage for caravans, boats, motor homes and vehicles, all of which can be stored on the site, safely wrapped up by 8ft high palisade fencing and monitored 24 hours a day by CCTV.

Dainton will also specialise in providing portable buildings and shipping containers for sale and hire.

Managing Director Paul Maddicott said "We are really excited about opening our 12th site in Bridgend, especially as this is our first in Wales. Our other sites are mainly concentrated in the West Country but Bridgend really does seem to be a great place to invest in at the moment, and we are hopeful this will prove to be the first of many in Wales."

Dainton's first self storage facility was opened in 2002 at Heathfield in Devon. Since then Dainton has opened in Plymouth, Barnstaple, Exeter, Torquay, Paignton, Ipplepen and St Austell, with expansion plans for storage facilities in Bristol, Gloucester and Darlington before the end of the year.

Self storage first came to prominence during the 1960s in America and has become an economically resilient industry in the UK as demand for storage space increases. Self storage provides consumers with their own secure space that they can access whenever they want by way of electronic key access.

Dainton's is a family-run business and its owner, Paul Maddicott, attributes its growth and ongoing success to the traditional values that founded the company; providing excellent customer service, best value and understanding their customers' needs.

Dogs Trust 'concerned' over road diversion

STAFF at Dogs Trust Bridgend are concerned that road closures to make way for a new solar park will stop their homeless hounds from finding loving homes.

The charity would like to alert the public to the lane closure, which may disrupt travel to the rehoming centre for five weeks from April 21 and hope potential owners won't bypass any pooches.

Dogs Trust Bridgend is also keen to highlight that their training classes, Thursday evening from 6pm to 9pm, will go ahead as usual.

Rehoming centre manager Beverley Price said: "Over the next five weeks, visitors to our centre will be required to take an alternative route. However, the diversion will be clearly signposted and will take under 10 minutes. We have lots of lovely dogs all hopeful of finding new homes and they all have their paws crossed that the five weeks of disruption won't deter visitors from heading to Dogs Trust Bridgend.

"Puppies such as adorable crossbreed Pip would normally find homes within days, but we fear the road closure may mean it will take considerably longer for her to finally find her 'furry tail' ending. "

Dogs Trust, Court Colman, Pen-Y-Fai, Bridgend, CF31 4NG, is open 12 noon to 4pm Thursday to Tuesday (closed Wednesdays).

See top right 'Fan could be your new friend' for the latest appeal.

Will Fan become your new friend?

The GEM has joined forces with the Dogs Trust to find suitable homes for inmates at the Bridgend rehoming centre. Tel 01656 725219.

FAN is nine years old and is quite typical of a working sheepdog, sensitive but strong. Fan does mix with other dogs and enjoys the company of smaller dogs as long as they are not annoying her!

She enjoys her walks, but is better being driven to somewhere a bit more quiet and away from livestock. She would be ideal for a collie experienced, active home, with a patient owner who will give her time to settle in. Children in the home will need to be 14 years and over.

LINDA FEAGAN
Supporter Relations Officer,
Dogs Trust Bridgend

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Conservatories are a great way of adding a light and airy room to any home. However, depending on where the conservatory is positioned and the amount of shade outside, it can let in too much light.

Too much sunlight can mean the conservatory gets very warm in summer and, even on a bright winter day, make it difficult to watch TV, browse an iPad or work on a computer.

At Securahome we are now able to offer an alternative to polycarbonate or glass – a solid roof.

Called a Livin Roof, this system can be fitted to an existing conservatory, so there is no need to change the existing walls and glazing.

Thanks to Kingspan insulation, the Livin Roof is 15 times more thermally efficient than a polycarbonate or old glass roof without solar control, meaning the conservatory will be warmer in winter.

For those who don't enjoy the, all-too-common, pitter-patter of raindrops, the Livin Roof also improves sound insulation compared to polycarbonate and glass.

The inside of the roof is a plaster-boarded to keep an airy and modern 'vaulted ceiling' feel, meaning it can be finished with down-lighters or pendant lights. With the option to add glazed panels to the Livin Roof, it's even possible to keep a view of the heavens!

Parkinson's: star's appeal

MY brother-in-law was diagnosed with Parkinson's about 15 years ago, and was my original inspiration for joining Parkinson's UK.

I have supported and worked with them ever since, and over the years have seen at first hand the pain and struggles that living with this devastating condition can entail.

At the start of Parkinson's Awareness Week, a new survey from Parkinson's UK revealed that an estimated 69,000 people in the UK with Parkinson's have experienced hostility and rudeness from members of the public.

It's unbearable to think of the suffering this can cause – it's bad enough, for example, having a long-term, incurable condition which can cause you to slur your speech and be unsteady on your feet, without being mistaken by a member of the public for being drunk.

I was shocked by the enormous number of people with Parkinson's who regularly come up against public misunderstanding and unintentional cruelty – a third of people in our survey have been stared at, a quarter had their symptoms mistaken for drunkenness, and one in 10 have been laughed at because of their symptoms.

This hostility can have a profound effect on people with Parkinson's, increasing their depression and anxiety, and leaving some people too frightened to leave their homes.

To combat this, we are urging people to become friendlier by pledging to do small acts of kindness such as smiling and being more patient. In particular, we ask people not to make assumptions or jump to conclusions that can make an enormous difference to all of us – especially people with Parkinson's. I do hope your readers will join me in pledging to make a difference.

For more information on Parkinson's Awareness Week, visit upyourfriendly.com.

Jane Asher
president, Parkinson's UK,
215 Vauxhall Bridge Road,
London SW1V 1EJ.

VOLUNTEER AS A MARIE CURIE HELPER

THE Marie Curie helper service is looking for volunteers to support people living with a terminal illness, and their families, throughout the Vale.

Marie Curie Cardiff and the Vale hospice on Bridgeman Road in Penarth will host two sessions on Wednesday, May 6 (6pm – 8pm) and Friday, May 8 (1pm – 3pm) to provide more information about volunteering opportunities.

Volunteers will be specially trained and matched with a person living with a terminal illness, in order to provide support for up to three hours a week for that person and their loved ones.

For details, call 08450 738596 or email southwaleshelper@mariecurie.org.uk

BCBC in line for new award

SEVEN of Wales' most deaf-friendly organisations have been shortlisted for a new Welsh award, including Bridgend County Borough Council.

The charity Action on Hearing Loss Cymru (formerly the RNID) has launched the Excellence Wales Award, to recognise the businesses and organisations in Wales who "go the extra mile to ensure they are accessible to the one-in-six people who are deaf or have hearing loss".

The seven also include the National Assembly for Wales and Welsh Ambulance Service Trust.

An independent judging panel will now decide on the Gold, Silver and Bronze category winners, which will be announced at the Action on Hearing Loss Cymru Gala dinner on May 15 at the Hilton Hotel in Cardiff.

LOCAL CAB SESSIONS

THE Citizens Advice Bureau, in partnership with Barry Communities First, is offering drop-in advice sessions in Barry, on debt, benefits and other issues at the Community Enterprise Centre, Skomer Road on Mondays between 9.30am–12.30pm; or at Coastlands Family Church, Tennyson Road, Colcot on Thursdays between 4.30pm–6pm.

A drop-in service is also available at the Citizens Advice Bureau office on 119 Broad Street, Barry, from Monday to Friday, 9.30am–4.30pm or on telephone advice line 03444 77 20 20.

LLANTWIT MAJOR & COWBRIDGE LIONS CLUB

COWBRIDGE MAY FAIR

BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY • MAY 4, 2015

The Cowbridge May Fair builds on success and offers a real family fun day

by PHILIP IRWIN

IT was around three years ago that the Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Lions Club set its sights on reviving an old rural tradition in the Vale – the Cowbridge May Fair.

The club had already enjoyed success by being heavily involved in reviving a similar traditional event in Llantwit Major – a community event that had many of the attractions of the old time country fairs.

However, that Llantwit event took place every two years, so as not to clash with the town's Victorian Fayre, so club members, particularly those from Cowbridge, turned their thoughts to what to do in the 'fallow' year.

Club chairman John Andrew told The GEM: "Reviving the Cowbridge May Fair was the obvious thing to do, and we found that there was great enthusiasm from the community."

What happened was that the first such fair, on May Day in 2013, was hailed a great success, and under clear blue skies the Bear Field in the town was packed throughout the day.

Local primary schools enthusiastically embraced the idea of dancing around the maypole, and set about learning traditional folk dances.

Teams were put together for a tug of war contest, and traders, crafters and voluntary groups came forward to take stalls on the field.

A stage was set up, and music was played all day, from local pop/rock groups to a wide variety of local choirs.

This year, on Monday, May 4, it's very much a question of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" but there will be a number of extra attractions for visitors – reflecting the success of two years ago.

A spokesman for the Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Lions told The GEM: "The Cowbridge May Fair programme is taking shape.

"On the stage there will be a variety of musical acts including pop/rock by CMBR, St Donat's Chorale, Cowbridge Rock Choir, CAOS and Stagecoach.

"On the field, there will be the traditional maypole plus gymnastics, zumba, Taekwondo, fun races and tug-of-war.

"In addition, there will be a great variety of stalls both on the field and in the leisure centre."

John Andrew said that the Lions were delighted that the leisure centre had come on board this year, and it was hosting a soft play area that should prove very popular.

When it comes to traditional attractions, there is nothing more traditional that a 'bonny baby competition. This will take place at 2pm, and the judge will be Vale AM Jane Hutt.

The Lions are particularly keen to see a strong tug of war competition, as it has been a traditional contest of strength at fairs, and can trace its origins back to ancient times.

At the 2013 Cowbridge May Fair, the Tug-of-War Shield was won by the Town Crier's team in a hard-fought 'pull off' against a team from Filco Cowbridge.

John Andrew said: "When we invited teams to come forward some three weeks ago, we had an excellent response, but some keen competitors said that they were having trouble raising a team from among their own circle of friends.

"With that in mind, we will be happy to make up teams on the day from any interested individuals".

If you would like to enter a team, or to be considered for a team made up on the day, contact Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Lions via the web site www.lmandclions.org.uk or by email infoi@lmandclions.org.uk.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)

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LLANTWIT MAJOR & COWBRIDGE LIONS CLUB

COWBRIDGE MAY FAIR

BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY • MAY 4, 2015

What's on at the Cowbridge May Fair

THE running order for performers on the main stage at the Cowbridge May Fair (timings may change on the day)) are as follows:

10.30am – CMBR (pop/rock).

11am – Official opening by the Mayor of Cowbridge with Llanblethian, Coun Peter Knapp.

11.10am – St Donat's Chorale.

11.45am – Cowbridge Rock Choir.

12.30pm – C A O S (Cowbridge Amateur Operatic Society).

1.15pm – Stagecoach Bridgend and Cowbridge.

2.15pm – Cowbridge Rock Choir.

4pm – Stiph Richard (pop/rock).

FIELD EVENTS during the day (timings may change on the day) are as follows.

11.10am – Vale Gymnastics.

1.30 – Zumba and Rebound.

2pm – Bonny Baby Competition.

2pm – Laughter Yoga.

2.30 – Llantwit Major Taekwondo.

3pm – Childrens Fun Races

Note: Maypole dances and the Tug of War competition will be operating throughout the day.

May Fair for family fun!

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

Another attraction this year will be a visit from the Cowbridge Fire Station, who will be bringing along their fire engine. It will be parked outside the leisure centre.

For *Top Gear* addicts suffering withdrawal symptoms after Jeremy Clarkson's travails, there will be some serious horse power on display, courtesy of the Maserati dealership in Cardiff.

There will be six prestige vehicles on the field: two Maseratis, two Lexus and two Toyotas.

All in all, the signs are excellent for another bustling community event which has every chance of repeating the success of two years ago!

The May Fair is designed for family fun, has a track record of delivering, so what better way is there to spend a bank holiday Monday?

Keep reading your free weekly GEM for more news on the May Fair, and for a full report and pictures!

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Out and About with The GEM

PLENTY OF POTENTIAL TO CREATE A THRILLER THAT WORKS, BUT...

Child 44 is cumbersome and disjointed bore

by GARETH JAMIESON
Follow Screen Talk on Twitter – @GEMScreenTalk

TOM HARDY has come a long way from playing the evil clone of Jean-Luc Picard in *Star Trek: Nemesis* in 2002 (incidentally, the only film this hardy soul has ever walked out of).

After the double hit of his sterling supporting turn in Christopher Nolan's *Inception* and the incendiary portrayal of Charles Bronson in *Bronson*, Hardy has ploughed a furrow that has seen him take on both epic films (*The Dark Knight Rises*) and smaller fare (*Locke*).

His latest, *Child 44*, is an adaptation of a novel by Tom Rob Smith, and sees him play Leo, a member of the military police in Stalin's Russia in 1953. When he starts to investigate a series of child murders (despite Stalin dictating that murder isn't a crime), he and his wife Raisa (Noomi Rapace) are sent away from Moscow in disgrace.

Leo will not let the matter rest and takes the investigation into his own hands, despite the risks it poses to him and those close to him...

There are several themes that run through *Child 44* – there is that of a man doing the right thing against the wishes of his superiors, and even his family – the notion that murder is nothing more than a 'capitalist disease' and, therefore, not a crime – with the added dash of a dysfunctional relationship, all set against the oppressive backdrop of a Stalinist Russia just emerging from the shadows of World War Two.

Unfortunately, these themes are not fully explored in what is a lengthy, dull and rather portentous thriller that replaces loftier concerns and questions, with rote clichés and story elements that reduce what could have been something intriguing to something no more than a potboiler.

Early on, we learn that the main character of Leo is an orphan, battling to survive and taken in by a kindly soldier, thus creating a connection when he stumbles upon the 'murders' of youngsters across Moscow.

However, this is thoroughly glossed over. The notion of murder being a disease rather than a crime, therefore allowing anyone with murderous intent free rein, is also glossed over – referred to but never digging too deeply into it.

These are just two examples of the frustrations encountered by this film, which ultimately becomes a melting pot of these elements, but never knows quite what it wants to be. One minute it's a race against time thriller about catching a killer, then it becomes a film about revenge, a good man being oppressed by a boo, hiss, villain – and then the next minute, it's a study of a relationship tested by the duplicity and paranoia of this period in Russia's history.

Richard Price's screenplay never manages to coalesce these strands into a satisfying whole, a flaw that even the best director would struggle to work with, but under the direction of Daniel Espinosa (whose English-language debut, *Safe House*, was a by-the-numbers action thriller) it simply becomes a bit of a bore; Espinosa's direction suitably bleak and oppressive but straining to create big sequences rather than concentrating on the minutiae.

The performances are all encumbered by actors struggling with their accents, the film sounding like an audition to voice a certain Meerkat-fronted website advert, with Tom Hardy not faring particularly well as his character, although noble and well-intentioned, never really engages you as a viewer.

Noomi Rapace is a bland collection of grimacing facial expressions, Gary Oldman offers little but gravitas, while Joel Kinnaman's Vasili merely sneers and hits the broad, 'bad guy' notes.

It's a shame, as there was plenty of potential to engage the brain and create a thriller that works on more than just the basic level, but *Child 44* even fails on the front, the 'whodunnit' aspect a footnote in what is ultimately an underwhelming, and boring, effort.

VERDICT: As unthrilling a thriller as you are likely to find, the most interesting aspects of *Child 44*'s narrative are buried beneath a landslide of weak performances and a confused screenplay. Daniel Espinosa's direction doesn't help matters, but this is a failure across the board in what is a leaden, cumbersome and disjointed piece of work. *Poor*.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: *The Bone Collector* (1999), *Se7en* (1995).

Garden now open at Southerndown

SLADE GARDEN, Southerndown, Vale of Glamorgan, CF32 0RP...

Set in eight acres, Slade garden is an unexpected gem with established drifts of spring bulbs and a woodland plant collection The terraced lawns, mature specimen trees, living willow arbours, rose and clematis pergola, orchard and herbaceous borders, create a very natural garden.

Husband's new passion – auriculas and alpines! Extensive views over the Bristol Channel.

Heritage Coast wardens will give guided tours of adjacent Dunraven Gardens with slide shows every hour from 2pm.

Opening information: Saturday, April 25, Sunday April 26 (2pm-5pm). Admission £4, children free. Homemade teas.

Disney's Magical Festival on Ice!

***DISNEY ON ICE* returns to the Motorpoint Arena, Cardiff with a Magical Ice Festival from April 29 – May 3.**

It will be the first *Disney On Ice* show featuring much-loved sisters Anna and Elsa from the popular animated film, Disney's *Frozen*. It also features favourite characters from Disney's *The Little Mermaid, Tangled* and *Beauty and The Beast*.

"Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse will be bringing magical moments from across the Disney kingdom," a spokeswoman said.

Comical segments from everyone's favourite Disney characters set the scene for the show stopping on-ice stories of princesses Ariel, Rapunzel and Belle.

There will be a special appearance by Anna and Elsa from the Academy Award-winning *Frozen*.

Audiences will journey up the North Mountains with the hilarious snowman Olaf, rugged mountain-man Kristoff and his loyal reindeer Sven as they help the sisters along the way in a story full of action, adventure, magic and unforgettable characters.

For tickets and further information, contact the venue or disneyonice.co.uk.

WHAT'S ON AND WHERE?

Vale AM's surgery

THE Vale AM, Jane Hutt, will hold a surgery this Saturday (April 25) from 12 noon to 1pm at St Bride's Major Church Hall, CF32 0SD. No appointment necessary.

Plant sale

VOLUNTEERS from the Cowbridge Physic Garden will be holding their annual plant sale in the gardens of Old Hall, Cowbridge on Saturday, April 25, starting at 10am. There is a chance to discuss horticultural issues with experts from the Garden.

Other nursery stalls will also be available, and a raffle.

Art Society

ON Thursday, April 30, Cowbridge Art Society welcomes Llantwit Major artist Nick Davies, who will give a demonstration of ink drawing using pipettes and sticks.

Nick, who has exhibited in numerous galleries throughout south Wales, as well as in Oscars, Cowbridge, specialises in landscape paintings. The society meets on Thursday evenings at the Old Hall, Cowbridge from 7pm–9pm and visitors and new members are welcome. For details of activities see www.cowbridgeartsociety.com.

RNLI AGM

THE annual general meeting of the Penarth fundraising section of the RNLI will be held at Penarth Yacht Club on Wednesday, April 29 at 2.15pm. All are welcome to attend.

Gardening Club

THE next meeting of the Cowbridge Gardening Club will be the AGM and planting evening on Thursday, April 30 at 7.30pm in the Lesser Hall. New members welcome.

Parkinson's charity event

THE Bridgend Branch of Parkinsons UK coffee morning on Friday, May 1 from 10am to 12.30pm at the Heronston Hotel, Ewenny Road, Bridgend.

Tickets (£4) on the door with tombola and a raffle. All proceeds to go for research into a cure for Parkinsons.

Friendship art

TO celebrate the conception of the Tree of Friendship on May 1, an installation art work will be exhibited on the tree situated at the Knap Lake and Gardens, Barry on Saturday, May 2 from 11am.

The artwork was constructed during January 2015 with 31 images, one for each consecutive day of the month.

There will also be work exhibited by artists Gina Ward and John Parr of Canonhill Artspace. For further information, see www.glynpooley.com.

Westbourne art exhibition

THIS year, pupils in the junior department of Westbourne School, Penarth will be able to view their works of art at a special summer exhibition in the Pavilion at Penarth Pier.

The children, from nursery upwards, are working hard on their creations and have been inspired by the different styles of local Welsh artists; Gayle Rogers, Helen Elliott, Sheridan Ward, Julie Lyddon and Sarah Richards.

Family and friends of the children are invited to view the exhibition on Friday, May 8. Members of the public are also invited to call in to the Pier Pavilion any time between 12 midday and 5.30pm.

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YOUR Sunday lunch GUIDE

Enjoy your time with family & friends

SUNDAY LUNCH IS A GREAT INSTITUTION – AND A SPECIAL TIME FOR FAMILIES

SUNDAY lunch is a revered Welsh (and British) institution – a time in the week nowadays when busy families and friends often decide to gather at a local restaurant or pub to spend quality time together.

It provides a welcome alternative to the hours of preparing this special meal in the week at home (*and avoids the washing up!*). It is also an ideal opportunity to catch up on all the latest family news in a relaxing environment.

Now that sunny days have arrived, families may plan outings to a weekend leisure or sporting event, or a trip to the beach – so what better appetiser is there than the traditional roast, vegetarian or fish dish – depending on your preference?

In both the Vale and Bridgend areas, we are blessed with a host of high-quality establishments – some with seating outside as spring turns to summer.

There are often children's facilities available, so the kids can play on the bouncy castle or climbing frame, while mum and dad and their friends relax, knowing their youngsters are safe and fully occupied!

Pubs and restaurants may offer special deals – geared to the number of courses required, while for those who are unable to get out, there are delivery and pick-up services.

So no one has to miss out on that well-loved national institution – Sunday lunch!

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Vale is in the BBC spotlight in the lead-up to the election

Broadcaster Jamie Owen faces the camera in Barry.

IMAGES BY ANDY WICKS

THE Vale was in the spotlight this week in the run-up to the general election, as BBC Wales news teams escaped the studio and took to the road.

Travelling from Barry to Llandudno, they will be visiting and broadcasting live from key constituencies along the way.

The programmes will be taking the temperature among constituents and finding out which topics are being debated.

On Monday (April 20) the tour kicked off with a visit to Barry town centre.

BBC Radio Wales broadcast live from the BBC election tent located in King's Square with *Good Morning Wales* from 6am, followed by *Morning Call* at 9am and Eleri Sion from 1pm.

BBC Radio Cymru then took centre stage from 5pm with *Post Prynhawn*.

Caesar's Café hosted BBC Wales programmes with Radio Cymru's *Post Cyntaf* broadcasting from 8am followed by Dylan Jones at 9am. *Good Evening Wales* on Radio Wales was there from 4pm.

Wales Today's lunch time and evening programmes and *Newyddion9* were also broadcast live from the town.

Commenting on the tour's visit to Barry, Radio Wales' Eleri Sion said: "I try to champion Barry as often as I can, as I absolutely love living here.

"As I was brought up near Aberaeron, on the Ceredigion coast, my dream was always to live by the sea. My dream came true back in 2007 when we found our home in The Knap area and now I wouldn't want to live anywhere else."

GALLERY EXHIBITION

FROM May 9-29, local artists Geoff Dawson and Emlyn Hole will hold a joint exhibition of paintings of Welsh scenes.

June 6-26, a rare chance to see quilts and textile pieces hand made in south Wales.

Giles Gallery is at the Old Methodist Church, Cowbridge Road, Pontyclun, CF72 9EG; open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am-5pm (Wednesday and Thursday 10am-8.30pm), 01443 228638 / 07879 035921.

LLANTWIT MAJOR 165s TAKE THE TROPHY IN BELGIAN TOURNAMENT

THE Llantwit Major 165s touring party – 20 boys and four adults – left the rugby club on a wet foggy evening on Thursday, April 2, for their end of season tour to Ghent in Belgium.

The team of under-15 and under-16 players competed in the Ghent rugby tournament, a well-established festival that has just entered its 25th year and welcomes teams from all over Europe at every age level and every ability – including national sides from the Netherlands, Georgia, Germany and the host country.

Before any rugby could be played, there was the pre-tournament party to be dealt with, which saw the touring party turn up in full Hawaiian dress code and sunglasses.

So to the rugby itself, and after receiving a police escort into the rugby grounds that any national side would be proud of, the 165s were informed that there were only three sides in their group so they would definitely be bringing some silverware home!

The matches were played on a glorious Sunday afternoon, which was perfect for the style of running rugby that the 165s are becoming well known for.

First up were a side from Ashford in Kent, a strong team that had all their strength up front, helping them beat the local side by over 50 points in the opening match!

The 165s knew they had to start strong, and were running angles and breaking tackles time after time before a rush defence line saw Evan Holloway intercept and score the first try of the day.

This settled the team and excellent forward play from a lineout saw Lewis Sutton and his forward pack produce a clean catch and drive which ignited the backline of Ben Burrows, Tom Slimings, Scott Bunting, Evan Holloway and Joe Hanson, before a bursting run from Ben Simpson saw the travelling side's score increase to 10-0.

With halftime approaching and solid scrummaging from Scott Ankin, Iwan Williams Jake Peers, Lewis Sutton, Ethan Forrest, Edward Thomas, Cai Jones (captain) and Braidon Bennett, the 165s threw everything at the Kent side and a breakaway run from Williams, and solid rucking from Jones, saw the back line, burst through with a Bunting trademark crash ball that put Holloway in for his second of the day (15-0).

In the second half, good forward play led to a try (15-5).

Reduced to 14 men for a tip tackle, the Llantwit side continued to throw themselves at every opposition player, but were eventually found wanting and another try was scored in the corner (15-10).

The Llantwit management could see some players were starting to feel the pace and on rolled the big guns of Luke Morgan, the pace of Declan Ellis, Rhys Richards, Saul Connelly and Steffan Bugler and the guts of Jacob Young!

The fresh legs raised the tempo and the forwards battled hard before powerful No.8 Braidon Bennett crashed over under the sticks. Slimings made easy work of the conversion (22-10).

The opposition knew that time was against them and they continued to run every ball possible, and crossed the line, only to have the ball stripped and grounded by Holloway.

Confusion then followed, and everyone wondered if the Belgian referee had a new set of rules when he awarded a try to Ashford to make it 22-15!

With minutes to go, the 165s knew the game was on a knife edge and any wasted ball could go against them. Hard running from the forwards was matched when the backs threw a miss pass into the waiting arms of Jacob Young, who ran the last 10 yards and bounced a tackle before scoring in the corner.

Final score 27-15!

The second game was against a Ghent side that were determined to show that Belgium is capable of playing rugby.

Captain Cai Jones caught the opening kick-off, and after tidy ruck ball and a kick through from Tom Slimings, he was on the receiving end of some slick passing to race over the line.

Continued forward pressure in both scrum and lineout, with a top draw behind the back pass from Slimings, saw the 165s move left and then right, sending Declan Ellis over in the corner (10-0).

Gent knew they needed to perform and kept throwing everything at the defensive line of Bunting and Holloway, who hardly missed a tackle all day! However, if they did, they knew that big Joe Hanson was waiting to put anyone down that dared to cross his path!

Time after time he hit hard and linked with Simpson, Steffan Bugler and Ellis to run back at the Gent side.

Brilliant open play and a 25-yard gain line break from Bunting saw the ball move left and Jones go over for his second of the day. Slimings converted for 17-0

Good lineout throws from Scott Ankin, with excellent catching from Lewis Sutton and clean up work from Iwan Williams, Ed Thomas and Luc Morgan, saw Slimings get his just desert and go over in the corner just before half time for 22-0

The second half played out with the same pace and heavy forwards domination. Two solid scrums saw the 165s steal ball against the head and with slick hands from Connelly (on for Burrows) Ben Simpson went over in the left hand corner for his second of the day (27-0).

The next try came from a backs move to give centre Bunting a deserved try, Slimings converting for 34-0.

The final try was scored following another quick lineout and good hands from all the backs put Holloway over left of the posts. Slimings converted for 41-0.

The cup was awarded at the end of the tournament, and tour captain Cai Jones duly accepted on behalf of all players.

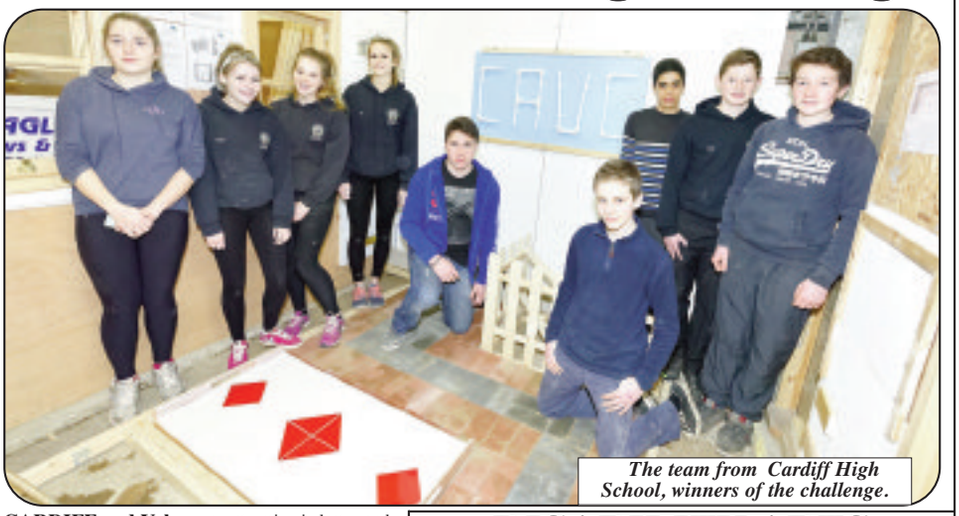
The management would like to thank all the main sponsors and local businesses (Agrii, LMRFC, Flocon, Bay Cars, Gileston Farm Feeds, Howdens of Barry, KCS, Lloyd Owens, Sensor Techniques Ltd, Sportscubs, Topstak, R&T Fabrication, Keyline, Edwards Machinery, Anthony Brown Estate Agents, MHM plant hire, Yara Fertilisers and H&H Build) who helped support the tour and without their generous donations the tour.

The 165s are away to Bridgend on April 26, before their final game against Llantwit Fardre on the Cardiff Arms Park on Friday, May 1, brings their season to a close.

All supporters past and present are welcome to see this great bunch of boys play sublime rugby before moving on to pastures new in the youth ranks next year.

Team: Iwan Williams, Scott Ankin, Jake Peers, Ethan Forrest, Lewis Sutton, Edward Thomas, Cai Jones (captain), Braidon Bennett, Ben Burrows, Tom Slimings, Scott Bunting, Evan Holloway, Ben Simpson, Steffan Bugler, Joe Hanson, Luc Morgan, Declan Ellis, Rhys Richards, Jacob Young, Saul Connelly, Ollie Rowbottom and James O'Donnell. **AH**

Students take on college challenge



The team from Cardiff High School, winners of the challenge.

CARDIFF and Vale College invited year-10 pupils from schools across the region to CAVC's Barry campus to test their construction skills.

The pupils, from Cardiff High School, Western Cardiff Federation School and Cowbridge Comprehensive School took part in the college's design and construction challenge. Held during National Science and Engineering Week, the competition was designed to give school pupils a taste of the various tasks involved in the construction industry and to show them the value of vocational education.

Each school team was given a training session then shown to a 2.5m2 square plot. They then selected a project manager and were split into contractors, each with a different task: paving the floor of the plot; designing and creating a tile mosaic; putting up fencing; and making the letters 'CAVC' out of piping as a test of plumbing skills.

The team from Cardiff High School won the challenge, but the judges were extremely impressed by the quality of work and level of commitment from all of the teams.

DISABILITY ARTS CYMRU EXHIBITION

The Vale Council's international gallery, Art Central, is currently hosting Disability Arts Cymru's annual touring exhibition, which includes work by over 40 artists.

This year's annual touring exhibition is dedicated to the life of Mark Anthony Annis, a member of Disability Arts Cymru, who sadly passed away in May 2014. He spent his life combating Asperger's Syndrome, and was devoted to his art practice.

He was greatly influenced by early 20th century artists from the cubist movement and exhibited his work widely throughout the UK and Europe.

Annis was also one of the 20 artists to exhibit in Art Central Gallery's inaugural exhibition held in 2006.

Among varied works are drawings by artist Gordon Farmer. It wasn't until the year 2000, when he suffered a spinal accident leaving him with limited mobility, that he began to draw.

Farmer said: "My art is a real therapy for me, as by concentrating on drawing I can find a new world with less discomfort."

The exhibition ends this Saturday, April 25. All are welcome and entry is free via the Town Hall, Barry.

Chancellor applauds Vale businesses

Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, last week joined Alun Cairns on a visit to the Vale and they met at Harris Pye in Llandow to discuss investment plans for sites in Barry and the wider Vale.

Mr Cairns said: "I was delighted to have been able to welcome George Osborne to the Vale of Glamorgan. The Chancellor was very impressed with the investment plans for a growing local business.

"This is a great boost for local jobs, with unemployment continuing to fall, and it is wonderful to see a local firm expanding worldwide."

Take a shoe box journey!

THE Samaritan's Purse south-east Wales presents 'Shoe Box Journey – it's not just for Christmas' at Bethel Baptist Church Centre, Pontyclun, on May 9, from 10.15am – 12 noon.

Hear a first-hand account of Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box distribution in Romania from Denise Dickman, who was there in December 2014.

Chris Roberts, Samaritan's Purse assistant OCC director of Field Ministries will also speak. There will be updates on last year's successful Shoe Box campaign in the area (22,499 boxes were sent) plus news of this year's campaign.

Family friendly – all welcome. Contact shoebox4sew@gmail.com or text to Maggs Hibbert 07817 444417.

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LOVING WELSH FOOD LINKS UP WITH FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL

COWBRIDGE is set to have its own specialised Welsh food and drink tours, it was announced this week and the launch ties in to the new Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival dates.

A new company – Loving Welsh Food – will launch at Arboreal restaurant in Cowbridge on Tuesday, May 19 just ahead of the Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival on May 24 – 25, where it will debut the tours.

Director of Loving Welsh Food, Sian B Roberts, has been a regular at the festival in the demo marquee and is appearing again at 10am on the Sunday of the festival.

Loving Welsh Food will offer two appetising bite-sized half day experiences in the Vale (1pm – 4.30pm) throughout the festival: 'Welshcakes and Wine' on Sunday and 'Afternoon Tea and Bubbly' on Bank Holiday Monday.

The Welshcakes and Wine tour will delve into the beautiful countryside surrounding Cowbridge and visitors will be treated to a tour of Hendrewennol Fruit Farm (another festival exhibitor) and Meadow View Vineyard, where they will be given the opportunity to sample some of the finest biscotti, ice cream, chocolate, fruit vinegars and sparkling wines in Wales.

The Afternoon Tea and Bubbly tour will include a trip to Llwyn Nwydig Farm and Meadow View Vineyard and visitors will be served up a cup of Welsh tea or coffee and a cake at Mrs O's Pop-up Tea Rooms while taking in the breath-taking views the 78-acre farm has to offer, followed by a glass of Gwin y Fro sparkling wine at the vineyard.

As well as food and drink tours, Loving Welsh Food offers safaris, Welsh cooking workshops, food talks and demonstrations. Tour tickets are available at *www.ticketsource.co.uk/lovingwelshfood*.

Director of Loving Welsh Food Sian B Roberts said: "We're very excited about the launch at the fabulous Arboreal restaurant. We'll be inviting guests to find out about our future plans while sampling some of the fantastic Welsh food and drink produced in the Vale of Glamorgan.

"We can't wait to debut the tours at the Cowbridge Food and Drink festival; it's the perfect opportunity to demonstrate our new offering with like-minded people who love Welsh food and drink."

Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival Manager, Polly Wilson, said: "Sian has done an incredible job establishing the new company and the tours and safaris are a great way of showcasing the fine produce that Cowbridge and beyond has to offer.

"We'll be at the Loving Welsh Food launch for people wanting to find out more about the tours and the other fantastic activities we have lined up at this year's festival."

For more details about the food tours visit www.lovingwelshfood.uk/news or email sian@lovingwelshfood.uk.

To find out more about the Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival contact Polly on 07875 290428, email info@cowbridgefoodanddrink.org. Full details and the complete lineup can be found on the website www.cowbridgefoodanddrink.org.

Tickets for the festival – which cost £5 per day or £8 for the weekend – can be purchased online with a 10 per cent discount on all pre-sale tickets. Children 12 years and under go free.

This year's Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival takes place on Sunday, May 24 – 25.

ESS names Ty Hafan as its charity of choice

ONE of the biggest teacher recruitment agencies in Wales has announced plans to raise funds for Tŷ Hafan children's hospice, as its charity of the year.

Education Staffing Solutions, which has its head office in Cardiff and branches throughout south Wales and England, kicked off its sponsorship by giving a Ty Hafan family a day out at the Liberty Stadium during Ospreys Rabo 12 match against Zebre in Swansea.

The company is offering prizes for the charity's Hero Friday fancy dress competition taking place during Children's Hospice Week (May 11-17) month and it is organising a Wales Onesie carnival in June.

"Supporting children is central to everything that we do at Education Staffing Solutions so it was a no-brainer really," said chief executive Kevin Moyes.

"Ty Hafan has only been going for a little over 15 years, but it does a brilliant job in offering care to life-limited children. I have seen that at first hand, because my young nephew and his Mum and Dad have been given so much love and support by the carers at Ty Hafan."

Regional AM hits out at hospital parking chaos

ELUNED PARROTT, Welsh Liberal Democrat AM for south Wales central, has demanded urgent action on what many residents are calling 'traffic and parking chaos' at the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff.

"With ever-increasing services being provided at the site, visitors and residents attending outpatient appointments are regularly being turned away from the hospital site due to existing car parks being unable to cope with the demand," she said.

"The situation has reached a critical point. It is not acceptable for outpatients, many of whom are unable to walk far, to be turned away from the site when they come for what for many are longstanding appointments.

"Far too often, traffic queues on the approach to the car parks delay ambulances trying to access the site, which is extremely worrying.

"What is also concerning is that more people are likely to be directed to the hospital if services such as neonatal care and inpatient children's services are removed from the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Llantrisant.

"I am calling on the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board to urgently address the issue," she concluded.

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CATS Protection's Bridgend Adoption Centre has a surplus of working, out-door cats on its books.

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A pair of feral/outdoor cats can provide a very efficient and environmentally-friendly alternative to chemical pest control. Garden centres, golf clubs, smallholdings, farms, stables, shops; in fact, anywhere where there is room to roam and rodents to catch, will provide working cats with a suitable environment in which to live and work.

Owners must be prepared to provide their feline employees with food, water, some shelter and veterinary care when needed. Contrary to popular belief, regular food and neutering will not affect a feral cat's desire to catch prey.

If you would like to provide a home for a feral cat please contact Cats Protection's Bridgend Adoption Centre on 01656 724396 or email bridgend@cats.org.uk.

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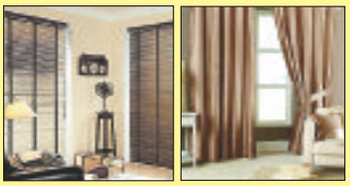

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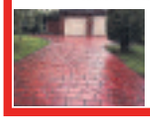

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BRADLEY ON FORM AT STEEPLECHASES

BRADLEY GIBBS (20) from Ynysybwl, who rides out for Aberthin National Hunt trainer Tim Vaughan, was in cracking form at the Llangeinor & Pentyrch Hunts Point-to-Point Steeplechases at the Dunraven Stud, Llanmihangel Farm, at Pyle near Bridgend, where he rode a four-timer.

Three of those wins, on *BringInTheBranston, Bajan Blu* and *Only Time'll Tell*, were on horses owned and trained by the stud's owner David Brace OBE.

After finishing unplaced in the opening young horse maiden on *Dunraven Doc*, won by Evan David on the Robert Luke trained *Midnight Grace,* owned and bred by show jumper Steve Hadley, Bradley's first win came in the confined in which the blinkered *BringInTheBranston* outjumped his four rivals to score by eight lengths from the odds-on favourite *Tiger Rag* (James Tudor).

Then in a match for the members' race, Bradley on *Bajan Blu* made nearly every post a winning one when just holding on from the odds-on *Banned In Bhutan* (James Tudor) by a neck to deny Cyril Liley a first win in the race.

Cyril, one of the joint-masters of the hunt, has been trying to win this race for years as an owner and a rider and has been runner-up on nine occasions!

Mr Kristen Jacka's six-year-old bay gelding *Mr Sawyer* gave Bradley his third win of the day when winning the restricted by a head from the favourite *High Hatton* (James Tudor).

Mr Jacka, a Treorchy shopkeeper, said: "He won a maiden at Lower Machen last year, and he loves this quick ground. I fancied him that much that I had a good bet on him at 25-1."

Bradley's fourth winner of the day came in the open maiden race in which, on the always prominent *OnlyTime'll Tell,* he led at the second last to beat the best turned out *Perky Bob* (Nick Williams) by one-and-a-half- lengths.

David Llewellyn's homebred prolific *Rosies Peacock*, under regular rider Welsh champion John Mathias, had the men's open race won a long way out and came home 10 lengths ahead of *Heavenstown*, ridden by former national champion James Tudor, who had a frustrating run of seconds. James cannot be that many winners short of his 250th win.

Super Villan, a 10-year-old chestnut gelding and a former winner under National Hunt rules, gave Nelson farmer Paul Webb and his trainer son Ceri their first win when landing the ladies' open race by one-and-a-half lengths from *Teenage Kicks*.

Confidently ridden by Emma Moseley, *Super Villan* was wearing cheek pieces for the first time. "That was awesome," said Emma on dismounting.

The odds-on favourite *Lauberhorn*, ridden by Anna Metekohy, was left with too much ground to make up and slipped on the last bend when coming with a late dash.

The organisers did well in watering the course during the week before racing and were rewarded with more runners than they could really have expected.

The crowd certainly appeared to be enjoying the racing and, despite a cold wind during the early part of the day, many could be seen picnicking and plenty of people stayed behind to see David Brace's 13-year-old grandson Connor win both pony races, the 138cms on his bay mare *Molly*, who is the same age as his rider, and the 148cms & under open pony race on his eight-year-old bay mare *Dont Tell Dai*.

BRIAN LEE

Below-par Barry continue their push for promotion

WITH every match vital in the push for promotion, Barry needed to be at their best against bogey side Llandaff in Cardiff last Saturday.

Unfortunately, this was not the case and the 31-10 scoreline in Barry's favour does not reflect what happened in those 80 minutes.

For the first 20 minutes, the Barry game was littered with mistakes and with a lively home side eager to keep the ball in play, the visitors were called on to defend for most of that period.

In fact, the home team could well have been in front with a little more accuracy.

Barry finally managed to begin to get some meaningful possession, reached the opposition 22 for the first time and launched an attack of their own which forced the home side to defend.

Forced to defend, the home side began to concede penalties and from a quickly-taken one Scott crashed over in the corner to score and add the extras to give the visitors a seven-point lead.

At a stage when Barry had the upper hand and plenty of possession, further scores were expected by the away supporters, but regretfully due to a mixture of greed and white line fever, this was not to be as at least four try-scoring chances were missed.

The half, which should have seen Barry with a bonus point in the bag, ended with them just one score ahead and the game still to be won.

Buoyed by having held out in the first 40 minutes, Llandaff opened the second full of confidence and it didn't take long for them to square the match following a quickly-taken penalty some 40 yards out, as the scrum half crossed without a finger being laid on him. With the conversion successful, the game was level.

Worse was to come as Barry, unable to get set piece possession from either scrum or lineout, struggled to see the ball at all and it was no surprise when their dominance in all facets of play saw the home side take the lead through a penalty.

In reality, things could have been worse but for some sound defending by the visitors.

Barry were indeed fortunate to be only three points down when the game entered its final quarter, and it was difficult to see where their next score was coming from if they continued to be second best.

Somehow, and perhaps this shows the character of the squad, a mistake by the home defence from the kick off gave Barry possession and the recycled ball was spread wide for Jones to score wide out with the conversion missed.

This score seemed to put new life into Barry and with the home team appearing to tire, space began to appear in all areas and, as the ball was spread wide, White was on hand to take the final pass to cross for a try which was converted for a nine-point lead.

Llandaff had not given up and as Barry continued to lose their set piece, the defence had to be at its best. However, it was Barry who finished the stronger and after being held just short of the line, Evans crashed over from the resulting lineout and Barry finally got the bonus point so crucial at this stage of the season.

Now in total control and camped on the home line' Barry's final try was scored by Perry to see the game end with a 31-10 victory.

Next Saturday is Barry's own 'Judgement Day' as they entertain Old Illtydians, one place below them in the league, in the first of two meetings between the sides over the next fortnight. This will have a huge bearing on the end-of-season table.

AJ

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LLANTWIT MAJOR £115,000

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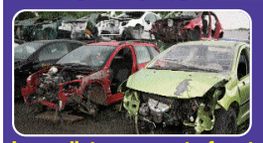
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Public Notice

THOMAS EDWARD THOMAS (Deceased)
Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the afore-mentioned deceased, late of 15 Middlegate Court Cowbridge CF71 7EF, who died on 22/12/2013, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned Solicitors on or before 03/07/2015, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.
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Lost & Found

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In Barry area.
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LOST
Near Cowbridge town hall on Friday April 10. An irregular shaped **mother of pearl pendant.** Set in silver with green suede necklace, was wrapped in tissue paper as it was a present.
Please contact Jane on **07740 428689.**

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GEM FAMILY NOTICES

COLLIER
Graham
(13.09.1935 - 26.04.2012)

Partings come and hearts are broken,
Loved ones go with words unspoken.
Deep in our hearts there's a memory kept,
For a Husband and Father we will never forget.
Now reunited with daughter Joan.
Missed dearly RIP- Wife Helen,
daughter Angela and Grandchildren xx

MAZEY
Edmund

Suddenly after a short illness at University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff, Eddie aged 97 years. Beloved husband of the late Mary, much loved dad of Anne and son-in-law John, also a loved gramps to Kathryn and the boys.

Resting at A.G. Adams & Son until the funeral service in The Chapel of Rest on Monday, April 27 at 2pm, followed by committal at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium. Family flowers only. Donations in lieu if so desired for Orchard House Residential Home c/o the funeral director.

HELLINGER
Brian Anthony

Passed away on April 18 at University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff. Beloved husband of Margaret, dearly loved father of Craig and daughter-in-law Nicala and much loved by his grandson Antony.

Resting at A.G. Adams & Son until the funeral service on Wednesday, April 29 at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry at 1pm. Family flowers only.

MATTHEWS
Fay Patricia Margaret
(née Probert)

Passed away suddenly but peacefully on April 12, aged 78 years. Devoted wife of Brynley, much loved mum of Gwynneth, Mervyn, Bronwen, Eirwen, Allin and Gareth. Adored nan and great-grandmother to all her grandchildren.

Resting at A.G. Adams & Son, Tynewydd Funeral Home, Gladstone Road, Barry until her funeral service at St David's Methodist Church, Winston Road, Barry on Thursday, April 30 at 1.45pm, followed by interment at Barry Cemetery at 2.45pm.

Flowers may be sent to the funeral home.

HARVEY
Colin Richard

Peacefully on April 17 at the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff. Colin, devoted husband of Anna. Much loved dad to Neil, Claire and Ian, cherished grampy to all his grandchildren.

Colin will be dearly missed by all his family and friends.

Resting in the private chapel of The Vale Funeral Service, 181 Court Road, Barry until his service at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry on Wednesday, May 6 at 10am. Family flowers only, donations if desired may be made to The RAF Benevolent Fund or The Royal British Legion.

All enquiries to Lyndsay Ellis @ The Vale Funeral Service Service.

METCALF
Daphne Vivienne

Passed away peacefully on 15th April 2015 at Derriford Hospital, Plymouth aged 86 years. Beloved wife of James (deceased), loving mother of Julian, Nigel and Andrew, mother-in-law of Sonja and Eileen and dearest nana of Jemima, Dylan and Rory.

Funeral service at Efford Crematorium, Plymouth on Tuesday, 28th April at 2pm.

All flowers and enquiries to Walter C. Parson Funeral Directors, The Stables, 32 West Street, Tavistock, PL19 8JY. Tel: 01822 617300

HORSEY
Alan Alexander

Passed away peacefully on March 25, beloved husband of Pauline. Dearly loved father of Julian, much loved father-in-law of Angharad and devoted grandpa of Seren.

Will be sadly missed by all family and friends.

Funeral service at Coychurch Crematorium on Monday, April 27 at 11am. Family flowers only please, donations if desired to Parkinsons UK Cymru, Maritime Offices, Woodland Terrace, Maesycoed, Pontypridd, CF37 1BZ.

GEORGE
Louise *(née Thomas)*

Peacefully, after a very short illness, on April 15, at Withybush Hospital, Haverfordwest, Louise, eldest daughter of Percy and Xantippe Thomas, formerly of Splott Farm, St Donats.

Beloved wife of the late Graham George and much loved mother of Carolyn, Penelope and Christopher, and mother-in-law to Alistair and Elizabeth. Cherished Gran of Rhiannon, Simon, Rebecca and Owain, and adored Great Gran of Iona, Zachary, Xanti and Phoebe.

Funeral service will be held on Monday, April 27 at St Andrews Church, Narberth at 11.30am, followed by committal at Parc Gwyn Crematorium, Narberth at 12.15pm.

Family flowers only - donations in memory of Louise can be made payable to British Red Cross and sent to: Ms Penny George, Ysgubor Hen, Honey Hook, Llangwm, Pembrokeshire, SA62 4JR.

Frank Mitchell

Time unfolds another year, but memories keep you ever near.

Love Shirley and family xx

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Birthdays

Jasmine Amy Fitzpatrick

Happy 10th Birthday to our baby girl on 20th April

Lots of love from Mummy, Gareth & Jess, Nanny & Granshi and all your Uncles, Aunties & Cousins. Xxx

OMG LOOK WHO'S 40

Jo Eveleigh
(Née Staples)
on 23 April

Love you lots, Mum, Dad & all the family *xxx*

Dianne Brown
Happy 60th Birthday
on 25th April

Lots of Love from Philip, Just Steven, Gareth, Peter & Mitch. XXX

Happy 50th

John Mitchell
from all your friends at
RPM SHOPFRONTS

Barry Thirds entertain touring team

BARRY THIRD XV entertained the visit of touring side King's Royal Hussars on a fine, dry Saturday afternoon at Reservoir Fields.

After a long hard season it was fitting for manager Frank Greig and Ken Chow be afforded some luxury in team selection as numerous players made themselves available.

Will King made his first appearance for the club in 18 months, while there were also debuts for Nick Hillman on the wing and Connor Woodfin from the bench.

Barry knew they were up against the odds early on when the Hussars demonstrated their superior fitness and intensity with some good strong runs. They were, however, repelled by some brilliant scramble defence, most notably from Rhidian Mepham and flanker Morgan Fogg.

The Hussars utilised their giant No. 8 at the base of the scrum to cause havoc in the Barry defence, but often their lack of match practice showed as the ball was knocked on.

The home side fed off scraps but eventually pieced together some phases. The line-out began to function with King a colossal figure, and the half-back partnership of Mepham and Chris Bailey began to move things forward.

Following some indiscretion by the visiting side, Barry found themselves in opposition territory for the first time. Playing with tremendous patience and composure, they were rewarded with the first try when Glyn Pirso crashed over from close range. Hillman failed to add the extras.

Roused from their slumber, the away side responded with a superb break by the back row, which put Barry under enormous pressure. The result was a try from out wide, despite the best efforts of Kirsch, which went unconverted to level the scores.

With the wind in their sails, both metaphorically and literally speaking, the Hussars came forward again before the break and were rewarded with another close-range try, although there was some doubt as to whether the ball was grounded. The conversion gave them a 12-5 lead at halftime.

Looking to utilise the boot in the second half with the elements in their favour, Barry started well, especially after Ring, Howells-Davies and Morris were sent on for some fresh impetus.

However, it was the visitors who once again showed the greater fitness and also a larger bench, and despite the efforts of Jones, Mepham, Poole and ultimately King, it was another 40 minutes of rearguard action by the green-and-whites.

Barry would hold out for long periods in their own half in the second period but finally succumbed in the last quarter, when the Hussars added three tries near the end to reward their territorial superiority. The final score was 29-5.

The management would like to thank the superb effort by all the players for the game and also the King's Royal Hussars for being superb tourists. We sincerely hope to welcome them again next season.

Barry Third XV will finish their season with a home game against touring side Mold this weekend.

Team: Poole; Kirsch, D Evans, Davies, Hillman; Bailey, Mepham; Pirso, Leighton Jones, Fortt; Deyes, Betts; Fogg, Lloyd Jones ©, King. Replacements: Ring, Howells-Davies, Woodfin, Morris, E Evans, Rees, Adams. Man- of the match: Fogg.

KC

GORDON LANDS A HOLE-IN-ONE

A Wenvoe golfer will have no excuse for missing his next tee-time after winning a limited-edition BOSS watch for achieving a hole-in-one.

Gordon MacPherson, 69, scored his with a six-iron ace on the 159-yard, par-three ninth at Wenvoe Castle GC, and the 10-handicapper was rewarded with membership of the exclusive BOSS Watches H1Club and a specially-commissioned, commemorative timepiece.

The luxury German brand has once again pledged to reward club golfers with an exclusive watch for every hole-in-one recorded during a club competition in 2015.

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Gymnasts shine at events

BARRY YMCA gymnasts recently enjoyed success at the South Central Modified Grades event.

Caitlin Meadows and Kelsey Cross both competed in Modified grade 3. Caitlin took the overall title and placed 1st on bars and beam, and 2nd on vault and floor. Kelsey placed 2nd overall, 1st on floor and vault, 2nd on bars and floor.

Hana Davis (7) also competed on the same day in the South Central 7 Years Prep event. She claimed the overall title and also gained another two gold medals on beam and range & conditioning, silver on bars and floor and bronze on vault.

More Barry YMCA gymnasts were in action at the Welsh Grades events. Bria Karim, Erin Gamble and Evie Wong all successfully completed the required skills to pass their Grade 3. All three scored high enough to be awarded a 'highly commended'.

Celyn Powell, Laila-Jade Lang and Sophia Foscolo enjoyed similar success in Grade 4. Celyn and Sophia gained 'highly commended' while Laila-Jade secured a 'pass'. Lily Foscolo was entered for her first grading – grade 6. She demonstrated lovely work to gain a 'highly commended'.

Congratulations to all gymnasts and thank you to coaches Aimee, Anne, Charlotte, Karen and Sophie for their hard work coaching the above girls.

Barry YMCA are looking for future competition hopefuls and will shortly be holding an open day to identify talented children to join their competitive preparation group.

Prospective gymnasts do not need to be able to perform any particular skills, the coaches are looking for children who are strong, flexible and brave enough to try out new things.

If you are interested in your daughter attending this open day please visit the following Facebook page www.facebook.com/ymcabarry and leave your daughters name, date of birth and a contact number. Alternatively contact YMCA Barry on 01446 724001 and leave your details.

KD

The Barry & District men's skittle league

DIVISION 1:

49'ers. (P.Solowyk 29) 286, Geest (J.Hawkins 32) 289; Bunker Boys (K.Hewitson 33) 252, Colcot Boys (A.Bumford 28); Ex-Servicemen (H.Hellyar 32) 270, The Hairy Lemons (S.Gully 28) 274; The Hairy Lemons (R.Ryles 27) 273, Colcot Boys (T.Sherrin 25) 239.

DIVISION 2:

Abercrete (N.Morgan, S.Miller 27) 273, the Royalists (G.Davies 32) 262; Barry Social (B.Allen 25) 236, Buffs Exiles (B.Griffiths 27) 261; Exiles (M.Bumford 28) 284, Willie Wombles (B.Gratton 34) 300; Posties (M.Gallimore 29) 285, Witchill Poachers (D.Adams 29) 278; Sea View (R.Incledon, B.Wastkins 28) 297, BP Breakaways (J.Mills 30) 275; Tynny Fliers (G.Hobbs, S.Taylor, P.Snook 29) 288, Abercrete (D.Arnold 27) 284; Tynewydd Lads (C.Wright 29) 276, Tynny Fliers (A.Davies 29) 265; Willie Wombles (P.Taylor 32) 285, Tynewydd Lads (D.Sluman 34) 280; Witchill Wizards (D.Casado, D.Britton 32) 338, Road Runners (J.Norris 35) 264.

DIVISION 3:

Billy Whizz (A.O'Brien 29) 250, British Rail 253; C.U.D.(D.Perington 32) 263, KP Monkeynuts (M.Alanui, K.Payne 27) 271; Cannon Balls (G.Currie 32) 304, Billy Whizz (A.O'Brien, S.Coombes 30) 274.

HR

The Barry & District leagues and results

CRIB DIVISION 1:

Railway 6, Rhoose Social 9; West End 9, West End Wanderers 6; Cadoxton Cons 5, Liberals 10; Wyndham Cons 6, Moors Boys 9.

League table: Liberals 202, Wyndham Cons 199, Cadoxton Cons 197, Moors Boys 194, West End Wanderers 186, West End 185, Rhoose Social 178, Railway 159.

SKITTLES DIVISION 1

Sea View B 6, Cambrian Flyers 1; King William XII 0, Rugby Club 7; Allsorts 2, Rhoose Social B 5; Slammers 6.5, Rhoose Social A 0.5; Runway Club 5, Rhoosters 2; Liberals C 2, West End C 5; Rhoose Social C 7, Barries Boys 0; West End D 6, Liberals A 1.

League table: Sea View B 127, West End C 121.5, Allsorts 106, King William XII 99, West End D 97.5, Slammers 94.5, Rugby Club 94, Barries Boys 89.5, Rhoose Social B 85, Rhoose Social A 84, Rhoosters 81.5, Rhoose Social C 71.5, Liberals A 66, Runway Club 60.5, Cambrian Flyers 60, Liberals C 55.5.

SNOOKER DIVISION 1

Harbour B 5, Wyndham Cons A 0; Rhoose Social C 3, Wyndham Cons C 2; Cadoxton Cons Z 5, Harbour A 0; Penarth Cons B 4, Savoy B 1; Savoy A 4, Cadoxton Cons B 1; West End C 2, Rhoose Social B 3.

League table: Harbour B 104, Savoy A 96, West End C 79, Cadoxton Cons B 76, Cadoxton Cons Z 76, Rhoose Social C 60, Rhoose Social B 59, Wyndham Cons A 57, Harbour A 56, Penarth Cons B 48, Savoy B 47, Wyndham Cons C 47.

SNOOKER DIVISION 2

Cadoxton Cons A 1, Liberators 4; Market Street B 3, Railway B 2; Penarth Cons A 2, Market Street C 3; Services Social B 1, Railway A 4; Penarth Cons D 5, Sully Sports A 0; Railway C 4, West End B 1.

League table: Railway A 93, Market Street C 78, Penarth Cons D 73, Liberators 72, Market Street B 71, Railway B 70, Services Social B 67, Cadoxton Cons A 63, Penarth Cons A 59, Sully Sports A 57, *Railway C 50, West End B 47 (* = points deducted).

All league & cup fixtures and results at www.barryleagues.co.uk and on Facebook - search for 'barry leagues'.

JW

Bridge results

RESULTS for the Vale of Glamorgan Bridge Club, Celtic Sims competition on April 20:

1st Tony Disley & Phil Felman 70.24%, 2nd Tony Ratcliffe &Patrick Jourdaine 60.71%, 3rd Mike Best & Kevin Maddox 57.44%.

LE

The Barry Beavers excel in Carmarthen swimming event

BARRY Beavers went to Carmarthen on April 18 to compete against seven other Welsh clubs, and we came second overall, getting four gold, six silver and one bronze medal out of 21 swimmers.

Even though we were 10 swimmers down, the ones that competed did fantastically well and we are all very proud of them.

The medalists are: gold - Abigail Finch, Callum Savory, Courtney Rogers; junior relay: Tyler Savory, Jesse Rodgers, Courtney Rogers & Abigail Finch. Silver - Keira Richards (her first gala), Jack Kemp Louis Davies, Ffion Jones, Tyler Savory, James Jones. Bronze - senior relay: Mark Eveleigh, Gareth Lloyd, Nicky Cushen, James Jones.

The other swimmers taking part, who all missed out in such tight races (under a quarter of a second in many cases) were: Joanna Davies, Shannon Rogers, Philip Daly, Talisha Rogers, Katie Rosser (her first gala), Will Griffiths, Sarah Davies, Layla Rogers. We shouldn't forget our two instructors, Christopher Economides and Sarah Davies; they competed against other instructors from the other clubs taking part so well done.

We look forward to our next event in Ebbw Vale in May. A big thank you to the mums that came with us to support our club.

PF

Athletic cricketers celebrate 125 years

ON Saturday Barry Athletic Cricket Club held its 125th anniversary dinner at The Masonic Hall in Barry, with Phil Steele as the guest speaker.

The night was a great success with over 80 people attending the event for a four course meal, the new and old mixed on a brilliant night.

Dil Samuel, Gary Morgan, Simon Westphal, Geraint Evans, Rhys Davies, John Clogg and Carl Thomas were seven of the Welsh Cup winning side from 1985 in attendance on the night, with Doug Curtin, John Murphy, Alan Storey and Huw Grove, who were also part of the winning side, unable to attend. Other old players from that era who were in attendance on the night were Owain Clements, Tim Clements, Owain Thomas, Billy Davies, Keith Selway, Paul Adams, Peter Robinson, Kelvin Rosser, Colin Davies and Lindsay Bennett.

The dinner was compared by vice chairman Steve Jones, with speeches from first team captain John Gee, chairman Peter Hellyar and a toast by Glan Williams, with Phil Steele having the audience in laughter with his stories of a 20 plus year career with the BBC.

The night was a great success and the club have more planned for the year.

This Saturday Barry Athletic are at home to Blackwood at the Athletic Ground with a 1pm start; on Sunday a select side will play Barry West End, also a 1pm start.

MR

NO LONGER BOOM TIME FOR POINTS

THE GEM's Brian Lee, who first reported on the Welsh hunt-racing scene back in 1966, takes another look through his many press cuttings scrap books and discovers a time when the hunts received a lot more entries than they do today.

ON February 9, 1985, under the heading Boom Time For Racing, I wrote: 'Point-To-Point racing has never been so popular. Despite the firm ground for most of last season, there were over 12,000 runners at meetings up and down the country. Between February 23 and May 18, 18 meetings are due to be held in the south and west Wales areas.'

Well this season, only a total of 14 hunts applied for fixtures in these two areas and one of these had to be abandoned owing to the course being waterlogged. The number of entries received so far this season is certainly down on past years. The Banwen Miners, for instance, had a whopping 43 entries for their men's open race and 33 entries for their adjacent hunt's race back in 1985.

That was the year I tipped in the press *Hallo Dandy* to win the Grand National and under the heading 'Hywel Continues Welsh Tradition' I wrote: 'Cardigan-born Hywel Davies is the second successive jump jockey from Wales to win the Grand National, following Neale Doughty on *Hallo Dandy* last year.'

(Incidentally, Neale Doughty, a former member of the Llangeinor Hunt Pony Club, came from Kenfig Hill.)

Hywel's victory has given Welsh Hunt racing a tremendous boost as before he joined the paid ranks he regularly took part in Welsh point-to-point races. I recall seeing him at his brilliant best at Lydstep some years ago when the horse he was riding, *Heather's Son*, was brought to a standstill halfway through the race when another horse fell in front of him. Somehow or other he got his mount going again, and to the surprise of everyone on the course, managed to get up in the last 50 yards to pip the favourite.

Other Welsh point-to-pointers Hywel was associated with were *Romany Park* and *Knight's Queen*.

However, in his very last ride in a Welsh point-to-point, before he turned professional, he was auspiciously unseated at the Llangenior Hunt. Hywel, who was given the kiss of life after being thrown at Doncaster a couple of seasons ago, is the younger brother of Geraint Davies, a National Hunt jockey of note before injuries forced him to retire.

Hywel, who has written himself into the racing history books, follows the tradition of other Welshmen like Jack Anthony, Fred Rees, Evan Williams, Mervyn Jones, Fulke Walwyn and Neale Doughty, who have all been successful in the world's greatest steeplechase.

I also reported that at the Gelligaer point-to-point: 'Scott Perry, aged 20, chalked up his first win when winning the men's open race on Milton Bradley's *Santoss*.' Sadly, Scot was later killed in a farming accident if my memory serves me right.

The ladies' open race at this meeting was won by Shan Morgan aboard *Luchello* and Brian Price recorded a double on *Team* and *Captain Rondo*.

Beth Llewellyn from Bargoed rode her first winner on *Ballytask* in the hunt race and Joe Price took the adjacent hunt's race on his 14-year-old ex-chaser *Hobo*.

Under the heading 'Alison First' I recorded that: 'Alison Kenniford, a bank clerk from Ystrad Mynach, had her first ride in a point-to-point at the Talybont yesterday and landed the members' race, despite falling at the eighth fence.

'Alison remounted her bay gelding *Grange Lad*, who caught the favourite *Riverside OK*, who had earlier unseated his rider Andrew James at the second fence, to win by six lengths.' While at the Curragh: 'The men's open race went to *Yellow Jersey*, trained at Bridgend by his owner Geoffrey Hamer, and ridden by Paul Hamer the owner's younger brother.'

There was a record entry of 173 horses for the Glamorgan Hunt Point-To-Point Steeplechases this year and I reported: 'Cyril Liley's *Ocean Boy*, ridden by John Thomas, took the first division of the maiden, officially by half-a-length. But from the bank the margin seemed a lot closer. There were those who thought *Ardican* had won. Leading riders John Llewellyn and Tim Rooney landed doubles. Llewellyn scored with *Suiker Bous* and *Master Straight* and Rooney won on *Time Breaker* and *Savage Sally*.'

For the first time in 15 years, an evening point-to-point meeting was held in Wales when the Tredegar Farmers held their meeting in Cwmbran and Carol Lee, wife of National Hunt trainer Richard Lee, chalked up her sixth win of the season on *Majetta Crescent,* who beat *Debt Follower* in an exciting finish.

St Athan's John Thomas took the maiden race on *Wonder Dream*.

You can e-mail your point-to-point or horse racing stories and pictures to brianlee4@virginmedia.com or phone on 02920 736438.

Wanderers take spoils of victory

IN their second pre-season friendly, Sully Centurions narrowly lost to neighbours Barry Wanderers, after a game that had its fair share of interesting moments!

Batting first, Sully started brightly as openers Tom Davies and Nathan Baker put on 37 for the first wicket, when Baker was caught for 23 off the bowling of Cole.

Tom was then joined by new boy Santos who also looked in good touch before he too was caught for 33.

Davies and Adam Sylvester (34) took the score along to 130 when Davies was bowled for 47. The scoring rate slowed down considerably after the halfway mark, thanks to some accurate bowling from Sandhu, Hassett and Downey.

Lloyd Bruce's 29, a quick cameo of 13 from Jake Griffett and 15 at the death from the returning Peter Thomas gave the score some respectability. Centurions were eventually all out for 217.

Wanderers' opening pair of Hannerford and Blundell never put a foot wrong as they piled on the runs. They had put on 179 for the first wicket when Hannerford was stumped by stand-in wicketkeeper Jake Griffett (on for the injured Baker) off the bowling of Bruce for a marvellous 113.

The next wicket fell only one run later as Santos bowled Croft for a duck. With Baker off injured and the early exits of Ellis and Sylvester, Centurions finished the match with only eight players on the field and the Wanderers' batsmen found the gaps in the field with increasing regularity.

However, the match went down to the last over when Blundell, who carried his bat for 80, hit the winning runs with two balls to spare. Wanderers fully deserved the victory and Centurions now look forward to the return match later in the season.

Sully Centurions 217 all out; Barry Wanderers 218 for 2.

MF

Brynhill ladies get all arty!

On April 7, Brynhill ladies welcomed the artistic talents of Vaughan Cummins with a fantastic lesson in how to turn a blank canvas into a work of art.

In only two hours, using acrylic paint and various sizes of palette knives, he produced an amazing landscape of Snowdonia. It was a remarkable evening watching his masterpiece take shape, and all in absolute silence.

The latest competition results are: March 31, Easter Egg winner Rose Pitman,18pts, runner-up Jan Tattersell, 16pts; April 7, Rabbits and Tigers, winners Glynis Gould and Helena Combes 79.5.nett; runners -up Di Tapscott and Linda Hewlett, 81 nett; April 14, Jo Whitehouse Cup, winner Gemma Evans, 37pts., runner-up Jo Kirkpatrick 35pts; Gran's Trophy, winner Jo Kirkpatrick 35pts over the back 9 from Linda Hewlett.

CH

The Vale Cup finals are in full swing

THE Vale of Glamorgan Association Football League started the end of season finals on Friday, April 8, with the Dockers Cup.

The Division 2 League Cup final saw Barry Belgrade FC take on Vale United FC. After letting in the first goal, Barry Belgrade came back with three unanswered goals to take the trophy, final score Barry Belgrade 3, Vale United FC 1.

On Sunday, April 10, Division 1 took centre stage with Tynewydd FC playing VIFC. Starting the match as favourites were VIFC as the league leaders.

Two Jordan Mortimer goals in the second half put one hand on the cup, but a late surge by Tynewydd FC saw Dale Miller pull one back. With only seconds remaining a heavy tackle from Gareth Union saw a red card being issued, leaving Tynewydd FC with 10 men but the whistle went soon after. Final score Tynewydd FC 1, VIFC 2.

The junior section started their finals on Thursday, April 16, with the Year 11 Cup, the Classic Sportswear Trophy. Holton Road FC took on Sully Sports Reds in a very close match; so close that after 80 minutes plus 20 minutes extra time, the score remained 0-0.

This meant the match was to be decided on penalties. Sully Sports started and scored two and missed their third but then scored their fourth. Holton Road got their first three in and had their fourth saved.

The fifth penalties for each team were scored, even a retaken Holton Road one as it was taken and saved before the referee blew his whistle! Sudden death then saw Sully Sports have their sixth penalty saved and Holton Road then scored to lift the Classic Sportswear Trophy.

The following night, Barry Town United FC took on Sully Sports Blues in the Year 7 final for the Brian Riseborough Cup.

Three goals from Louis Harding, Macauley Marks and Cian Anderson was enough to see Barry Town United win the trophy, final score Barry Town United FC 3, Sully Sports Blues 0.

Lastly on Sunday, April 19, in the morning the Harry Gratton Trophy was up for grabs in the Year 9 final between Barry Town United FC and Cogan Coronation FC.

A close game saw the game decided in the first half. A goal by Brooklyn McCabe saw Barry Town United FC take the lead but Cogan replied before halftime with goals from Luke Warcow and Arron Archer. Early in the second half, Barry Town United FC saw their goalkeeper sent off but no further goals were scored. Final score Barry Town United FC 1, Cogan Coronation 2.

The last Senior League Cup took place in the afternoon with Cardiff Airport FC taking on Cowbridge Town FC in the ASRS Cup; a replay of last year's Barry Cup final.

However, this year saw Cardiff Airport manage to gain a measure of revenge. Jermaine Martin scored two first half goals to give Cardiff Airport FC the lead by halftime and a third goal - in the form of an own goal - followed in the second to secure the ASRS Cup for Cardiff Airport FC. Final score Cardiff Airport 3, Cowbridge Town FC 0.

The finals continue this week with Cogan Coronation playing Sully Sports Reds in the Year 8 Cup Final on Friday, April 24, kick off 6.15pm. Then Sunday sees the Year 10 final between Holton Road FC and Sully Sports FC at 10.15am before the last final, the Barry Cup between Vale United FC and VIFC, kick off 2.15pm.

MD

SPORTS PROJECTS ARE PROSPERING IN THE LOCAL AREA

A doorstep sport project aimed at getting young people more active, more often in their own communities is thriving in the Barry area.

Delivered by the Vale Council's Sports Development team and Barry Communities First, the project provides activities "on the doorstep" for young people aged nine to 16 years who want to take part in sport.

The project was recently shortlisted for Street Games New Project of the Year at the UK awards ceremony, recognising the new activities that have been introduced as well as the new partnerships that have been developed.

There was further success when the Friday Night Football project led by police community supports officers and dedicated local volunteers Scott Nelson and David Chambers won the Newydd five-a-side football tournament, competing against teams from across south Wales.

With warmer weather on the way, there are a number of outdoor activities taking place.

Multi-sport events will be available at Pencoedtre Park, Gibbonsdown on Mondays from 4.30pm to 5.30pm, Victoria Park, Cadoxton on Mondays from 5.45pm to 6.45pm, Central Park every Thursday led by Elim Elevate from 4.30pm to 5.30pm, and Alexander Gardens on Fridays from 4.30pm to 5.30pm.

There will also be the Friday night football project on offer at Holm View with police community support officers and local volunteers from 3.45pm to 4.45pm for children aged 10 years and over.

Communities First along with local volunteers will be running a bike club for people to learn how to ride a bike safely and develop their basic cycling skills. Sessions are led by qualified leaders and volunteers and are aimed at young people aged nine or over.

All sessions are currently free of charge and as there is no booking needed any young people interested in attending sessions can simply turn up.

These projects are delivered as part of the Vale Sport plan with the aim of increasing participation in sport and physical activity. The project contributes towards the Council's aim of reducing health inequalities and ensuring residents are able to access the necessary services, information and advice to improve their wellbeing and quality of life.

A number of other partners are also involved in the delivery of the project including Vale Volunteer Bureau, Police Community Support Officers, Elim Elevate, World at Play and Newydd.

For further information, contact Sports Development Officer Rachel Shepherd on 07730 749485, Adele Twomey of Barry Communities First on 01446 709825, or visit www.barrystreetgames.org.

Free taster sessions for females

SPORTS clubs within the Vale hosted free taster sessions and open days throughout March for local women and girls.

Thirteen clubs in the local area signed up to take part in the event to encourage more women and girls to become physically active. Each of the clubs provided open days or taster sessions for free to promote activities on offer to women and girls in the Vale.

As a result, over 150 women and girls accessed sports activities at the participating clubs, with Windsor Tennis Club leading the way and attracting over 100 female participants. Other successful clubs included Penarth Rowing Club and Vale Women and Girls Football Club.

Ben Williams, AYP Officer for the Vale, said: "This was a great opportunity for local clubs to promote the many sports activities that take place in the local area. We wanted to show what's available for women and girls and are pleased the #MarchonGirls campaign was a success."

Rob Wedlake, tennis coach at Windsor Tennis Club, said: "We were delighted with the take-up and feedback from the #MarchOnGirls campaign which helped us to attract a raft of new players to our club at an annual open day. More than 250 children, parents and adult tennis players visited us for a variety of coaching and social tennis activities, of which at least half were female. As a result we will now be running ladies-only 'Tennis Tuesday' sessions from May 5, and offering further girls and ladies taster sessions during the Wimbledon fortnight."

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Anticipation builds ahead of point-to-point highlights

ON AND OFF THE TURF with Brian Lee

The Dunraven Bowl

BRIDGEND builder Roger Willcox and engineering company boss Bill Corrigan, joint owners of *Patricktom Boru*, recent winner of the men's open race at the Ystrad Taf Fechan Hunt Point-To-Point, are hoping that their eight-year-old bay gelding, which finished fourth in the Dunraven Bowl Novices' Hunter Chase at Chepstow Racecourse last year, will be first past the post this time on Friday (April 24).

A number of horses owned and trained in the Vale have qualified for the race which is the highlight for many of the Welsh point-to-point season. The race's sponsor David Brace OBE has yet to win it although he has had several horses which have been placed in the event over the years.

Last year's race saw the gambled on *Gale Force Oscar*, which was qualified with the Llangeinor Hunt, run out a very easy winner under Welsh champion rider John Mathias. The Brecon and Talybont horse *Supreme Regime* was third.

Llanharan's Evan David, who has been in good form this season, is expected to be aboard *Patricktom Boru*. Evan, who rides out for Aberthin trainer Tim Vaughan, is the younger brother of Tom David who is assistant trainer to Zara Phillips.

Race's history

WHEN the Dunraven Bowl was first held in 1996, it was won by *Miss Millbrook,* which gave Evan Williams the first of his three wins in the race. Evan, a former national champion point-to-point rider and now a leading Welsh trainer, also won on *Cherry Gold* in 2003 and 2004 but when *Cherry Gold* won for a third time in 2005, Jason 'Awesome' Cook was in the saddle.

Another national champion point-to-point rider to win this prestigious race, only this time a female, was Pip Jones, who scored on *Final Pride* in 1997, while the only other female to win is Welsh champion Fiona Wilson, who won on the rank outsider *Saffron Moss* the following year, 1998.

Chepstow and Hereford course specialist *Mr Dow Jones* won under west Wales' Dai Jones in 1999. Keith Pritchard's prolific point-to-pointer *Cannon Bridge* silenced those critics who said it couldn't jump regulation fences when landing the 2006 renewal and Welsh champion point-to-point rider Rhys Hughes was successful on *Kilbreena* (2007) and *Bob Bites Back* (2009).

Rhys Flint was successful in 2008 on *Paul* and Myfanwy Miles's *Lady Myfanwy,* one of Wales' most prolific point-to-pointers.

David Lovell's eight-year-old *Master Charm*, given a good ride by Tom David, beat *Minsgill Mans* in an exciting finish in 2010. The Lovell family dedicated their win to the late bookmaker John Lovell who was responsible for introducing computerised betting to the UK and who had been a great supporter of point-to-point racing and Chepstow racecourse.

In 2011, Pembrokeshire's Eric Clough's *Parthian Prince*, partnered by Paul Tolman, was later awarded the race after *Bob's Law*, which had finished first past the post, was subsequently disqualified by the BHA Disciplinary Panel.

In 2013, Matthew Barber, a 5lb claimer, riding the seven-year-old bay gelding *Hawkeye Native,* trained by his brother Marc at Narbeth, came home nine lengths ahead of Paul and Myfawny Miles' *Findlay's Find* who recently notched-up his 22nd win.

Last year, Lee Power's nine-year-old brown gelding *Gale Force Oscar*, ridden by Welsh champion point-to-point rider John Mathias from Tenby, landed a big gamble when coming home 20 lengths ahead of *Supreme Regime*, with *Doc Wells* a further four lengths away in third place. *Gale Force Oscar* must surely go down in the records as one of the easiest winners of the Dunraven Bowl, the race that all Welsh owners, riders and trainers want to win.

News from the Barrivale Bridge Club

LATEST results from Barrivale Bridge Club for April 14 are as follows:

The session coincided with the AGM for Barrivale and a celebration of the club's 28th birthday.

Birthday team results were as follows: First Team 2 – Peter Millar, Mick Green, Helen Jordan, Judith Owen and Noelle Bond with 49 IMPS; second Team 6 – Mike Close, Tim Barsby, Ann Macdougall and Sean Macdougall with 43 IMPS; third Team 3 – Huw Thomas, Celia Thomas, Tom Kendrick and Dave Thomas with 2 IMPS.

As from Friday, May 1, it is Barrivale Bridge Club's intention to hold regular morning sessions, commencing at 9.45am and finishing at 12.30pm. These will be assisted bridge sessions primarily for beginners, people wishing to return to the game and those who would like to improve their game.

New members are always welcome at Barrivale. A partner may be arranged if required. If you would like to join us ring 01446 418380 or 01446 733425 or call at the Pioneer Hall, Beryl Road, Barry on Tuesdays at 7pm or Friday, May 1 at 9.45am.

DR

THE BARRY AND DISTRICT LADIES SKITTLE LEAGUE

LATEST results for week commencing March 23:

Space Finders (K Jackson 34) 338, Allsorts (H Bunting 39) 323; Cigar Ladies (K Richard 3) 239, Coppers (J Hartnell 35) 299; Bakers Dozen (A Boauy 28) 255, SV Gals (R Sowoll 30) 266; Family and Friends (M Ogston 29) 253, Barry Stars (T Johnson 23) 210; Family Affair (C Grubb 31) 265, Castaways (D Jones 26) 241; Pila Palas (A Williams 33) 314, Special Angels (T Grisdale 34) 309; Red Admiral (M Gee 29) 272, Colcot Ladies (P Johnson 32) 276.

Second division: Castle Bandits (E Evans 27) 240, Strikers (L Goodwin 24) 230; Cad Con Fillies (J Rogers, L Old 23) 233, Roller Coasters (J Ebbs 24) 217; Breakaways (N Bichard, C Smith, J Davykins 30) 323, Witchill Widows (L Young 30) 284; Starlights (I Oliver 27) 249, Divas (S Gouvier 25) 147; Witchill Weebies (S Dobbinson 34) 331, After Eights (M Hellyar 39) 314; S V Lights (B Kenefick 26) 247, Clickies (K Davidson 24) 241; Bobby's Girls (A Seldon 29) 273, Vixens (L Gray 26) 241.

Third division: Lil's Devils (T Evans 25) 233, Rhoose Ravers (J Bowsher, G Shellem 24) 220; Etcetera (M Jones 27) 248, Jolly Dollies (V Jackson 34) 261; Merry Makers (H Davies 25) 226, Airways Angels (E Lewis, M Carpenter, Bec Gibbs, L Taylor 21) 213; Friends and Neighbours (R Page 31) 247, Westenders (S Woodfield, C Gee 27) 247; Persuaders (K Phillips 29) 230, Hill Billies (E Anzani, G Moorcroft 23) 198; Dolly Mixtures (J Preece, E Bryan 25) 235, Witchill Wanderers (S Reynolds 26) 181; SV Ladies (K Lacny 30) 255, Rugby Triers (D Sherrin 30) 268.

Fourth division: Wyndham Witches (P Cannon 26) 240, Odd Bods (S Ellis 23) 173; La Belles (R Clogg, N Cordy 31) 308, Twilights (S Ellis, S Davies 30) 291; Fallen Angels (T Lawrence 26) 255, Off The Rails (L Stephenson 30) 263; BFFs (R Bowen 24) 202, Railway Rogues (S Sjodin 30) 253.

Fifth division: Aristocats (T Weston 28) 211, Smurfs (Y Taylor 31) 116, Guardian Angels (G Fifield, L Harris 21) 185, Liberals (K Palmer 27) 198; Billy Bunters (G Loveless 28) 217, Hell Raisers (J Rosser 24) 213.

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05 **VAUXHALL Corsa 1.0 Life Twinport 3-Dr** In silver, low mileage ..... **Reduced to £2,195**

59 PEUGEOT 207 1.6 GT CC Convertable
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04 MINI One
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£3,495

61 AUDI A3 Sport 1.6TDi 3-Dr
In white, 43,000 miles
£10,995

05 RENAULT Megane 1.9 Diesel Dynamique Convertable
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Cowbridge Cricket Club celebrates 175 years of the sound of willow on leather

PHOTOGRAPHS by MIKE WILCOCK

ONE of the main events in Cowbridge Cricket Club's 175th anniversary year took place last week – a star-studded dinner.

Among the guests were the First Minister, Carwyn Jones AM, and Hugh Morris, chief executive of Glamorgan Cricket Club – and a former club player.

The chairman of Cowbridge CC, Hugh Williams, was master of ceremonies, and the audience was treated to a hilarious speech by Charles Dagnall, of the BBC's Test Match Special team.

The club also took the opportunity to launch a new publication – a history of the club (*pictured below*).

LEFT: Two stalwart members of Cowbridge Cricket Club, Gerald Leeke and John Bevan (right) received a presentation to mark their selection as honorary life members. They are pictured with club president Jeff Bird (on left) and Hugh Morris.

Jeff Bird welcomes the First Minister.

Nigel Anderson and Julian Ebsworth, the great-great-nephew of EH Ebsworth, who created Cowbridge CC's ground.

ABOVE: Roger Bird (left) with Alex Clay, who brought along the ball used by his grandfather JC Clay when he took 17 wickets in a first-class match.

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Bonus point earned...

but defeat is disappointing for Cowbridge

IT WAS a beautiful sunny day at the Athletic Field, and as both Cowbridge and St Albans had just the bare 15 players, it was uncontested scrums from the off.

Cowbridge kicked off and within four minutes were on the scoreboard as Alun John burst through the Buns' defence to score a fine try. The lead did not last long, as the visitors scored two unconverted tries in the next 10 minutes.

Cowbridge had a great opportunity to level the scores with a quick tap penalty but, with the line at their mercy, the ball was knocked on. Soon after, a loose clearance gifted the Buns their third unconverted try.

Three minutes later Cowbridge secured good possession and the ball was spun out to wing Tom Johnson who sprinted over in the corner, followed by a fine conversion by No 10 Luc Williams.

Cowbridge were now on fire and solid work by the pack, with Geraint Thomas, Rhys Price, Rhod Walker and Connor Boys prominent, led to a fine steal at the base of the scrum by No 9 Richie Howsen, and this resulted in a break by centre Huw Lougher, who fed Johnson for his second try to give Cowbridge the lead.

Unfortunately, some sloppy defence saw the Buns come right back into the game with two tries and a conversion in the dying minutes of the first half. The halftime score was Cowbridge 17, St Albans 27

Cowbridge started the second half as they did the first, pressurising the opposition into mistakes, and a scrum in their 22 saw the ball go to the left and back to the right for Luc Williams to split the defence and stroll over under the posts, the conversion taking Cowbridge to within three points of the visitors.

As the game progressed, both teams visibly began to tire due to the heat and rock hard pitch. However, the game burst into life as Tom Johnson broke away from the 22 and sprinted away for what seemed to be a certain try, only to be hauled down inches from the line.

Howsen also came close but with just minutes to go, when it looked like Cowbridge might well sneak a victory, the Buns broke away for a try and, with Cowbridge down to 14 for the final minute, they scored a further try on the whistle, for a final score of Cowbridge 24, St Albans 39

Fair play to both teams who gave their everything in tiring conditions. Cowbridge had opportunities to tie up the game but the visitors were that little bit stronger in the end.

However, the 15 players put up a great fight and it was good to Chrissie Powell on the pitch helping out; the try bonus point was scant consolation.

The youth teams had no games on Saturday, but the seniors now have three games left – Taffs Well away this Saturday, then St Albans away on May 6 (to be confirmed) and finally Old Illtydians at home (Police Field) on Saturday, May 9.

This Sunday marks the anniversary of the death of Captain Thomas Clarke.

The Sunday following, May 3, will see a gathering of Tom's family and friends at the rugby club in celebration of his life and all he meant to those who knew him; full details will be in next week's report.

RV/RK

CRICKET CLUB KICK OFF THEIR ANIVERSARY SEASON IN STYLE

ABOVE (left to right): Jeff Bird; Hamish Buckland (Glamorgan CCC treasurer); Neil Brand (Cowbridge Cricket Club captain); Carwyn Jones; Charles Dagnall and Hugh Morris). **PHOTO by MIKE WILCOCK.**

COWBRIDGE Cricket Club celebrated the 175th anniversary of its first recorded fixture with a dinner on Friday evening.

Over 200 members and friends attended the event, with the initial impression of the evening's style being set by saxophonist Jess who serenaded the arrivals.

The drinks reception was held in the pavilion and featured a visit from The RT Hon Carwyn Jones AM, the First Minister.

Mr Jones was intoduced in typically splendid fashion by Cowbridge Town Crier, Jon Wilks. Mr Jones spoke of the importance of clubs such as Cowbridge and expressed his admiration for all who had been part of keeping the club prospering over such a long period.

Dinner was served in a marquee with club chairman Hugh Williams conducting a game of heads and tails with a theme of the history of the club before president Jeffrey Bird introduced the guests.

The raffle and the auction were splendidly supported before the president announced that Gerald Leeke and John Bevan, two stalwart members, had been elected honorary life members.

The recipients were presented with engraved tankards by Hugh Morris, the CEO of Glamorgan CCC, who began his career, which led to his playing for England, at Cowbridge. Hugh then addressed the diners before the speeches concluded with a hilarious performance from BBC Test Match Special commentator, Charles Dagnall.

As the evening drew to its conclusion, it was the general view that the 175th anniversary season had been launched with impeccable style.

(See page 39 for more photos). **JB**

Wonderful weather for bowls teams

THE recent wonderful weather has been ideal for bowls.

Cowbridge Bowls Club is a strong club with a growing membership, and this was evident when 32 members turned up on a sunny Monday for social bowls.

Two days later the first competitive game was played - a mixed friendly against the Penarth Rectory Road Club. It was good to see all six rinks occupied, with 48 players in action.

The result was a win for Cowbridge by 117 shots to the visitors' 77. Cowbridge also won on four of the six rinks.

Sue Flowers had the best scoring rink with support from Mansel Davey, John Hunt and Phyllis Price.

Allan Wallace, Helena Snelling and Norman Wilkinson's rinks had comfortable wins. Shirley Wilkinson and Joan Bradley's rinks lost narrowly but overall it was an excellent team performance.

Although the club is 20 years old, there are many in Cowbridge who do not know where we are. You can find us behind the Leisure Centre – the entrance to the green is hidden behind two large storage containers.

The local authority own the green but the club is run and managed by its members. We are open from 11am each day during the summer months and the public are welcome to watch play from the benches that surround the green.

This Saturday, the men have a home friendly against Llantwit Major which starts at 2pm.

Free taster sessions are still available for those wishing to try the game. A coach will be available on the the next two Sunday afternoons, April 26 and May 3. If interested, just ring Michael Bradley on 01446 773289..

You can find additional information about the club on our website, cowbridgebowlingclub.co.uk.

MB

Dan punches to success!

LLANTWIT MAJOR boxing club continued its run of success last weekend, with heavyweight Dan Morgan winning a split decision contest against Highfields boxer Mathew Smith.

The contest took place at the RAFA club in Ely. Smith, being a local boxer with the home town advantage, stepped back into the ring for his first fight in four years after injury setbacks

The bell sounded for the first round and Morgan started brightly, putting Smith on the back foot immediately.

The second round saw much the same high work rate with both boxers still busy, barely stopping for breath. The final round saw Morgan tire a little bit and the pressure eased off, allowing Smith to connect with a couple of clean shots.

The Llantwit Major boxer reacted well and dug deep to finish off the round strongly, doing enough to take the victory from the local lad.

Llantwit Major boxing club are looking forward to May 16 where they are holding an open air charity boxing event at Rhoose Cambrian flying club.

The event starts at 1:30pm and tickets are on a 'first come first served' basis. Adults are £10 and children £5, with all proceeds going to Wales Air Ambulance and the boxing club.

KM

Cowbridge darts league round-up

ON Tuesday, April 14, a full programme of league matches was played.

The Edmondes A were defeated 4-5 by the Edmondes C; The Highwayman Inn beat the Old Post Ladies 8-1, while the Edmondes B only won 7-2 at the Farmers Arms, giving them a one-point advantage in the race for league runners up with one match to go.

Nigel Thomas (Farmers Arms) hit another 180, taking his tally for the season to three, level with Lee Davies (Llanharry).

The league champions Llanharry remain undefeated after winning 7-2 against the Hare and Hounds.

Present league standings after 20 matches, are: Llanharry (147 points), Highwayman Inn (110), Edmondes B (109), Edmondes A (98), Hare and Hounds (81), Farmer's Arms (70), Edmondes C (67) and Old Post Ladies (36).

On April 28, the quarter-finals and semi-finals of both the men's doubles and ladies' doubles will be played. Men's doubles games will be played at the Farmers Arms and the ladies at the Edmondes Arms.

All matches start at 8.15pm and spectators are welcome.

For further information e-mail Paul *cowbridgedarts@gmail.com*; up-to-date information can be found on the website: *www.darts.apsn.co.uk*

PJT

Hockey club's helping hand from Waitrose

COWBRIDGE Junior Hockey Club is going from strength to strength and has recently received a cheque for £460 from Waitrose, courtesy of the 'Community Counter' scheme run by the store.

The money will be used to buy equipment and match kit.

The club has grown in numbers since starting with 15 members in March 2014, and currently has over 50 training regularly at Cowbridge Comprehensive.

The club also received a Community Chest grant to help get it started, buying essential equipment and also funding coaching courses for four young leaders and a parent too!

This season, the club entered the South Wales Youth league with under-9s, under-11 girls and under-13 girls, playing teams from Whitchurch, Abergavenny, Gwent and Bridgend.

The club trains every Tuesday at the school and is open to boys and girls aged between six and 15.

Head coach Jude Powell would like to thank: Parents for their continued support; Cowbridge Comprehensive for the use of the facility; the Vale Council Sports Department for their help and encouragement; and Waitrose (Cowbridge store), whose donation is greatly appreciated.

For more details about the club, contact Jude Powell on 0779 0267419.

JP